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ABSTRACT

A description is presented of the activities and outcomes of a project designed to provide training that would enhance the efforts of remedial educators to serve learning disabled students on campus. Introductory sections provide background on the increase of learning disabilities at community colleges, review the evidence of the need for the project, outline general and specific objectives, describe how project participants were targeted and selected, and offer an overview of the project's design and its activities. The next sections describe the project's two inservice training conferences, which offered consultation activities and workshops focusing on the following topics: (1) applying learning disabilities research in the community college classroom; (2) identifying learning disabled students in the classroom; (3) distinguishing language problems from learning disabilities in students with limited English proficiency; (4) examining the implications of theories and research findings for instruction and accommodation of learning disabled college students; (5) applying innovative teaching strategies; and (6) understanding a learning disabilities evaluation and its implications. A summary is provided of each workshop and other project activities. Appendixes include the results of participant evaluations of the conferences, conference agendas, an analysis of the on-campus effects of the conferences, and "Guidelines for Instructors Working with Learning Disabled Community College Students." (UCM)

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SCREENING, DIAGNOSING AND DEVELOPING INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING DISABLED COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS IN OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION AND BASIC SKILLS INSTRUCTION

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FINAL REPORT

Screening, Diagnosing and Developing Instructional Strategies for Learning Disabled Community College Students in Occupational Education and Basic Skills Instruction

Background

Recognizing the significant increase in the incidence of learning disabilities on the community college campus, this project was designed not only to heighten awareness regarding this issue but also to provide information about instructional interventions and other appropriate service provisions. For the many identified and yet undiagnosed learning disabled community college students, improvement in basic academic skills paves the way for improved performance in occupational education.

The overall purpose of this project was to provide inservice training to faculty of CUNY and SUNY Community Colleges in New York City Metropolitan area. Directors and instructors of programs providing basic remediation of academic and language skills were targeted for training that would enhance their efforts to serve learning disabled students on campus. The basic assumption underlying training activities was that participants would apply their training to supervision of and communication with other faculty on campus. Training activities were in the form of workshops where participants learned how to provide and recommend appropriate services to learning disabled students. In addition, interim consultation activities were conducted in order to maximize the effects of workshop-based training.

Project Need

As described in the proposal for this project, learning disabilities are the result of disorders in basic psychological processes, such as language, memory and perception, needed to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematics. This condition is considered to be of neurological origin. It can seriously affect the retention of information even over a short period of time. Further, it can affect the way in which a student learns in school, in training programs, and in the workplace. When instructors accommodate to the different ways in which learning disabled students process information and perform tasks, instruction can be highly effective

for this population. For example, a learning disabled student may have difficulty in occupational education because of poor visual-motor coordination. When the instructor acknowledges this problem, the task to be taught can be broken down to small increments so that all steps can be learned by the student. The student in turn learns the process of how he or she learns (learning to learn) and can apply these techniques, especially in situations where help is not provided by instructors or job supervisors.

In the proposal for this project, we pointed out that learning disability is becoming more prevalent in college. This increased incidence at the college level is not surprising given a national increase of 131% over the last eight years in students at the pre-college level officially classified as learning disabled. In New York City in particular, approximately 40% of all the approximately 110,000 special education students in the system are classified learning disabled and 63% of all special education school leavers in 1985 (with and without diplomas) were learning disabled students. National norms cited by HEATH (National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Handicapped Individuals) show that in 1985, 14.3% of all disabled college freshmen were learning disabled, compared to 4.7% in 1978, representing a threefold increase in eight years. In the City University of New York (CUNY), comprising 18 campuses, there has been an increase of 206% between 1982 and 1986 in the incidence of learning disability (CUNY Committee on the Disabled). This figure, however, only represents the students who have actually received services from the Office of Disabled Students Services on CUNY campuses. CUNY Coordinators for the Disabled and HEATH estimate much greater numbers of both previously diagnosed and undiagnosed learning disabled students on college campuses.

Learning disabled students on college campuses fall into two categories, those who were previously diagnosed and those who have been overlooked despite ongoing academic difficulties. In a nationwide survey it was estimated that between 5 and 6% of the 1981 freshmen were learning disabled.[1] Dr. Judy Birsh, past President of the New York Branch of the Orton Dsylexia Society, estimated that 10% of all

[1]Astin, A.W. and staff. The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall, 1981. Laboratory for Research in Higher Education, Graduate School of Education, University of California, L.A., December 1981.

college students evidenced some kind of learning disability. Dr. Gertrude Webb, Learning Disability Program Director of Curry College (Mass.) recently estimated that at least 3% of current students were learning disabled. In other words, between 3% and 10% of college students may be suffering from a learning disability today.

As we stated in the proposal, there are currently 60,000 students in CUNY community colleges taking regular course credits for a degree, and approximately 13,000 students in continuing education. A survey by the CUNY Committee for the Disabled reported that approximately 400 learning disabled students were known to the coordinators of disabled students on all of the two and four year college campuses in the system during the 1985-86 academic year. Based on the estimates cited in the previous paragraph, one could project that from 3% (2190) to 10% (7300) of CUNY community college students have some form of learning disability. One might also be tempted to estimate the incidence level on the high side because individuals who have histories of academic difficulty are more likely to be found in a community college in general, with urban community colleges in particular drawing on students from environments which would predispose them to neurologically based learning disorders. In addition, increasing numbers of undiagnosed adults have probably been admitted into many new non-matriculated community college programs (e.g., basic skills/literacy, ESL, and short-term occupational training), who were not in elementary or secondary education when screening for learning disabilities began in earnest. While the CUNY survey highlighted a striking increase and formidable numbers of already-identified learning disabled students, a low estimate of approximately 1,800 <u>unidentified</u> students on community college campuses at any particular time is even more astounding (2190 total estimate minus 400 identified who are on community college campuses). These undiagnosed students and their instructors are struggling in remedial and regular occupational programs with little knowledge that there is a mismatch between the disability and the instruction being provided. This circumstance leads to a waste of human capital and an unnecessary strain on the instructional and support systems of the community colleges.

We argued earlier that the substantial incidence level of learning disability on the community college campus is leading to confusion on the part of college staff. Instructors may be unfamiliar with learning disability, and may attribute a student's

failure to retain prior learning to the wrong causes. As in primary and secondary school, poor performance can erroneously be attributed to lack of effort, or emotional causes when, in fact, the student is actually learning disabled.

It is important for staff not only to know how they can best accommodate students who enter classes already having been identified as learning disabled, but to be aware of symptoms of learning disability in students who have not been identified previously. On the community college campus there are many students whose basic academic skills require further improvement. The learning of fundamental literacy skills may be impeded by an unrecognized learning problem. In some of these individuals the fact that English is not the first language may mask a possible learning disability. Instructors need to be trained to discriminate among various possible reasons for failure to learn adequately. Instructors in various occupational and basic skills/remedial areas (through which 80% of all CUNY community college students pass) require training and supervision in learning disability so that their teaching can be effective for all their students. We determined that staff development, for both matriculated and non-matriculated programs, is needed.

Some programs for learning disabled students exist on CUNY and SUNY community college campuses in the New York Metropolitan area. Almost every one of these programs resides within the baliwick of the coordinators for disabled students and primarily deals with pre-identified learning disabled young people. Few if any of these programs link up with basic and remedial skills instructors or occupational instructors in order to identify new students and modify in-class instruction for both new and previously identified students. This lack of linkage on community college campuses with instructors and the overall absence of a system for diagnosing and treating learning disabled students needs to be addressed. This, for example, is being done in the California Community College System.[2] Therefore, in running this project, IRDOE, as it had done in the past, focused on short-term staff development objectives as well as on the overall goal of stimulating discussion of larger system-wide strategies for students with disabilities--in this case, the learning disabled.

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[2]"Program Standards and Eligibility Criteria for Learning Disabled Students in Post-Secondary Education." Federal grant to Chancellors Office, California Community Colleges, 10/1/84 to 9/30/87. The overall goal of this project is to design a systemwide core program to serve learning disabled students in California Community colleges.

General Objectives

It was planned that Coordinators for the Disabled and Directors of Programs would be enabled, through the training, to return to the community college campus and provide technical assistance, training and supervision to instructors in occupational education and basic skills who have learning disabled students in their classes. Instructors who attended the training workshops would learn how to provide the most appropriate services to identified and suspected learning disabled students.

One of the underlying objectives of the training of coordinators and directors was to deal with possible views among instructors that higher education is not appropriate for disabled individuals. In defining and exploring the concept of learning disability, training would involve demonstrating that such individuals can succeed in the community college, given adequate support. Such training was necessary in order to modify attitudes to the learning disabled in occupational and basic skills education.

An informal survey of some community college staff that we had undertaken indicated that some directors and instructors in basic skills and occupational education programs were not aware of and/or were not utilizing the support facilities both on the various community college campuses (where they do exist) and at off-site agencies as well. An objective of training was to familiarize staff with services provided in their own institutions and elsewhere. Such services include: psychoeducational testing, counseling, tutoring, readers, proofreaders, note-takers, and proctors. Workshop participants would learn what each of these services entails and when they are appropriate for learning disabled students.

Specific Objectives

Coordinators for the Disabled, Program Directors and Instructors were trained to:

- Understand the meaning of learning disability and become familiar with typical profiles in order to identify possible learning disabled students.
- Become aware of recent research findings so that they can be applied in the classroom.
- Understand psychoeducational testing so that they can be used in planning instructional accommodations for the learning disabled.

- o Use specific instructional strategies in the classroom for learning disabled students including oral versus written means of assessment, peer tutoring, encouraging the use of tape recorders, review and reinforcement of material, basing instruction on the student's pattern of errors, etc.
- o Understand the relationship between problems of English language proficiency and learning disability.
- o Understand the social-emotional effects of learning disability in order to promote a dialog between learning disabled students and their instructors.
- o Refine teaching methods through informed questioning of students regarding their specific problems and how they deal with them.

Learning Groups

The target population for the training included the following community college staff in CUNY and SUNY Community Colleges in the New York Metropolitan area:

- o campus-based Coordinators for the Disabled
- o Directors and Instructors of programs, both matriculated and non-matriculated, in the following areas:
  - basic skills, developmental skills, reading and other remedial programs
  - occupational education
  - English as a Second Language (ESL)
  - Programs serving the physically and emotionally handicapped which may also contain unidentified learning disabled students.

Selection of Participants

In order to select participants from CUNY community colleges, the project staff initially worked with Dean Barbara Gonzales, CUNY University Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. She expressed interest in the project and provided the names of the Deans for Academic Affairs and Basic Skills on each community college campus. Letters were sent to each of these individuals informing them of the conference. They were invited to provide names of program heads and other faculty who would benefit from participation in the inservice training activities. Letters of invitation were sent to individuals who were recommended.

Metropolitan area SUNY community college Deans for Academic Affairs were sent letters inviting them to submit names of up to four program heads and faculty who would be potential participants. These individuals were invited to attend the training conferences.

Most of the Deans were highly supportive of training activities and submitted names as requested. It was anticipated that up to four faculty from each of ten to thirteen community colleges would participate in training. In fact, there was such a high level of interest in the training activities that both conferences were oversubscribed so that is was necessary to impose a cut-off on registration. A total of forty-seven community college faculty attended the first training conference on December 5, 1987 and a total of thirty-seven attended the second conference on March 27, 1987. As planned, participants included campus Coordinators for the disabled, heads and academic coordinators of programs, and instructors. All the CUNY and SUNY Metropolitan area community colleges were represented, as can be seen in the lists of participants provided in Appendix 2.

Advisory Committee

An advisory committee was formed at the beginning of the project, comprised of the following members:

Professor Michael Stimola, Coordinator for the disabled at Hostos Community College, CUNY

Professor Joann Mischianti, Coordinator the Disabled at New York City Technical College, CUNY

Professor Sandra La Porta, Coordinator for the Disabled at Hunter College, CUNY

Professor Victor Margolis, Coordinator for the Disabled at Nassau Community College, SUNY

Dr. Harold Friedman, Associate Professor at SUNY Graduate School of Optometry; Learning Disabilities Specialist

Regular contact was made with members of the advisory committee at all stages of planning inservice training activities. In addition, project staff attended several executive meetings of the CUNY Committee for the Disabled. At these meetings, project plans were discussed with campus Coordinators for the Disabled, who

provided helpful feedback and suggestions. These discussions were a continuation of those that had provided needs assessment information used in formulating the proposal for this project.

Procedures

Overview of Project Design.

CUNY and Metropolitan area SUNY community college attended six workshops conducted at two all-day conferences during the academic year. These workshops were developed around topics, skills and information needed to provide adequate instruction for already-identified and suspected learning disabled students on community college campuses. Besides the training provided at these workshops, some participants have spread the effects of their training at workshops to their home campuses. For example, Borough of Manhattan Community College developed a faculty committee and student support group based on information obtained from conference workshops. In addition, Dr. Jones, who presented at the December 5th conference, was invited to provide further training to faculty at Hostos Community College.

Interim consultation regarding learning disabilities was provided by a project staff member who is a learning disabilities specialist. Consultation was provided by telephone and by means of a case conference workshops attended by faculty from various community colleges.

Project Activities. The six workshops for community college faculty and the interim consultation activities were conducted around the following themes and topics:

- meeting the needs of the undiagnosed adult: identifying and working with learning disabled adults returning to school who were never identified as learning disabled in primary or secondary school.
- The transition of identified learning disabled students from high school to community college: understanding educational needs and determining students' level of independence so that appropriate support services can be provided.
- Interaction of instructors and learning disabled students: how the instructor can work with a previously-undiagnosed student in exploring the possibility of learning disability.

- Appropriate use of services for the learning disabled: testing, tutoring, extended time for tests, availability of note-takers, readers, proofreaders, proctors, use of tape-recorder in the classroom, counseling.
- Learning disability in physically disabled and sensory impaired students.
- Appropriate presentation of written materials for learning disabled students.
- Determining learning disability in minority bilingual students: the problem of test validity.
- Use of microcomputers in teaching basic skills to learning disabled students.
- Improvement of self-esteem and self-efficacy in learning disabled students.
- Teaching to students' patterns of errors.
- Using paraprofessionals and teaching assistants in working with learning disabled students.
- Evaluating progress in occupational and basic skills training in learning disabled students.

Workshop activities were evaluated at each conference. Summaries of these evaluations can be found in Appendix 1. There was a positive spread of effect of inservice training activities, as described in Appendix 2.

At each of the two inservice training conferences, resource materials were provided. Besides outlines of workshop presentations and information concerning purchasable resources such as video tapes to enhance services to learning disabled students, a variety of published articles were made available to participants. These articles are referenced in Appendix 3.

FIRST CONFERENCE

Friday, December 5, 1987

Workshop 1

Applying Learning Disabilities Research in the Community College Classroom

Presenter: Professor Frank Vellutino
Director, Child Research and Study Center, SUNY Albany.

Professor Vellutino is involved in research on the cognitive and linguistic processes underlying reading ability. He spoke in some detail about the major theories and research in that area and contrasted a number of popular but conflicting theories. He stated that one of the major misconceptions about learning disabilities is the belief that it is a well-defined, readily diagnosed entity. He said that it is not. His review was a critical one, evaluating some theories as more or less viable than others. He described several of his own research studies and explained his own theories about the cognitive and linguistic processes underlying reading ability and reading disabilities. He spoke of two conceptual distinctions which are useful in understanding and ordering the various theories and definitions of learning disabilities.

The first conceptual distinction was between general aptitude and specific aptitude. Many definitions of learning disability say that a person may only be called learning disabled if he or she is of high IQ (considered a measure of "general aptitude") and that his or her disability is a separate "specific" aptitude problem. Dr. Vellutino discussed some of the problems inherent in that approach.

The second conceptual distinction was that between ultimate and immediate causes of learning disability. Ultimate causes refer to genetic, maturational, neurological, or developmental factors--things "built into the system." Some of the basic process deficits postulated have been: perceptual deficits, cross-modal transfer, intersensory deficits, central auditory processing, attentional, and sequencing deficits. These are all basic difficulties in learning related to basic processes that may not be particular to reading but may be involved in all learning. In his review of the research literature, Professor Vellutino discussed various theories which attempt to explain learning disabilities in terms of certain ultimate

causes. He was particularly critical of some of the old, traditional hypotheses about learning disabilities, such as that the problem is one of perceptual reversal--seeing letters in reverse.

Immediate causes refer to problems in the development of basic skills (as opposed to basic processes) in a particular domain. He defined a basic skill as a skill that is a prerequisite for acquiring knowledge in a given domain. For example, in the case of reading disability, these are language related skills such as sight vocabulary, ability to recognize words quickly and automatically, ability to decode phonetically to make use of context, to make inferences, etc. Dr. Vellutino claimed that language is a critical basic skill for learning in general, and not just for learning reading. "Reading disabilities are language disabilities," he stated.

Professor Vellutino stated that while studying basic processes or ultimate causes of learning disabilities is legitimate for the research laboratory, it is not practical for the educational setting. In the educational setting it is better to invoke the immediate causality definition of learning disabilities and to focus on the basic skills deficiencies in areas that are required for learning. In addition, researchers can learn a great deal from the practical attempts which work on the immediate causality level.

He proposed that the best way to help a student is to define the skill the student is deficient in, that is, the basic skill that is prerequisite in a particular area or domain that he or she is pursuing. The skill should then be analyzed in terms of immediate, rather than ultimate causes--in terms of underlying skills, rather than basic processes, for example: vocabulary, phonetic decoding skills, sensitivity to grammar and syntax, text processing skills such as inference, advance organizing, understanding story grammars, etc.

He also suggested using mastery and criterion-referenced tests, rather than or as a supplement to norm referenced tests. The tests should be designed so that if a student has a particular subskill he or she should be able to do the test (or those items) and if he or she does not have that subskill he cannot.

Workshop 2

Identifying Learning Disabled Students in the Classroom: Typical Profiles

Presenter: Professor Kate Garnett
Department of Special Education, Hunter College, CUNY.

Professor Garnett started her talk with some statistics on students diagnosed as learning disabled, figures which are increasing across the country at all kinds of colleges including public city colleges and Ivy League colleges like Harvard. She considered the argument sometimes heard that the category of learning disabled is so broad that it does not describe any real disability. She disagreed with this claim and she stated that, although the numbers are large enough to be important, they are not so large as to suggest that significant numbers of college students are being improperly labelled learning disabled. Learning disability is rare, but it is a legitimate disability, she stressed.

Professor Garnett discussed the problem of how to help students whose native language is not English and who appear not to be learning. If the student has received language training and seems to be able to communicate in English, one must ask what else may be interfering with his or her learning.

In such cases, one of the first things to be done (after ascertaining that no physical sight or hearing problem is involved) is to assess the student's level of competence in his or her native language. This is difficult and sometimes impossible. Appropriate tests are not available in all languages. It is also difficult or impossible to test intellectual ability and academic skill level in the native language. Intelligence tests are based upon day-to-day knowledge of things expected to be known to people living in our society. If they can be criticized for being culturally biased against certain groups, then they certainly can not adequately assess the intelligence of a recently arrived immigrant. Therefore, said Professor Garnett, we must think not of intelligence but of performance, and of trying to increase performance ability.

Many students who are conversational in their native language have almost no experience with reading and writing in the academic sense. This is true even for some students who have high school diplomas in their native language-- just as it is

true for many English speaking high school graduates. When they are called upon to read or write academic subject matter in English, they therefore face a double difficulty. They are being asked to do in English what they cannot do in their own language. This is difficult, frustrating and anxiety-provoking for them.

Professor Garnett proposed that colleges counsel these students and help them to make a decision about whether to keep trying. She stated that many students are unaware of the extent of their skills deficits. Often they "get through" many credits without realizing it, until someone finally--and suddenly--confronts them with the seriousness of their problem. This can be devastating for students, and it was suggested that we may be doing students a disservice by letting them "get by" in many subject area courses without having to demonstrate reading and writing skills.

Professor Garnett then went on to discuss certain kinds of problems that interfere with the learning of both non-native and native English speaking students. These are problems which can be quite successfully compensated for, if not always eliminated, and include difficulties in problem solving and organization of work and study.

Many students, even if they understand the English language, have trouble generating solutions to problems--generating multiple hypotheses and finding efficient ways to test them. This is often particularly true of students with real language impairments and may be evidenced in either writing or reading or both. In writing, for example, grammar and punctuation may be reasonably good, but the ideas, even good ideas, are not organized. Some students seem to have difficulty in taking into account the perspective of the reader when they write.

In the subject areas, many students do not know how to organize facts in some meaningful way in order to be able to memorize them. Instead they try to memorize a set of unorganized, separate facts, a task even the best learner would have trouble doing.

Some suggestions to help students with organizational problems were:

- o subject area instructors should give students an outline at the beginning of the semester and of each class session. Professor Garnett pointed out that up until college, teachers do a lot of structuring for the students, and students are then expected to do this on their own in college, with no transition. College instructors should continue to outline and organize, if

possible in ways that will show and encourage students gradually to do this more by themselves.

- o Tutoring services should teach students how to organize academic material.
- o Students should be taught what kinds of questions to ask to make things clearer to themselves. Often they are confused and don't know what information to ask for or why they should ask.
- o Students should be taught to ask the instructor what topics will be covered that day; in other words they must learn to ask for the organization they need.

Professor Garnett discussed how the college or university can organize its services for learning disabled students. Most important is inter-departmental coordination in determining student needs and coordinating available services. Also important is keeping track of how students are progressing from semester to semester. There must be an ongoing process of testing/evaluating, teaching testing/evaluating, teaching. Finally, she discussed the value of peer discussion, support or "rap" groups as an esential part of any services for special needs students.

Workshop 3

Distinguishing Language Problems from Learning Disabilities in Students with Limited Proficiency in English

Presenter: Professor Jacqueline Jones
Department of Specialized Services in Education, Lehman College, CUNY.

Professor Jones began her presentation with a discussion of one of the key problems in evaluating and teaching limited English proficiency learning disabled students. This concerned the extremely wide variation among these students in their degree of learning disability and in the level and nature of their competency both in English and in their own language. There are some students who have only conversational skills in both languages. Students also vary in levels of literacy in their native language. Some have done sophisticated reading and writing in that language, and some have not.

Limited English language skills in and of themselves are not evidence of learning disabilities. An English language "disability" must be distinguished from a language disability. Unfortunately, it is very difficulty to evaluate limited English proficiency students for learning disabilities since it is often difficult to distinguish the limited English skills from certain learning disabilities. There is a risk of either falsely diagnosing a learning disability when the problem is really one of English language skills or of missing a real learning disability, including a language disability, because it is assumed that the problem is just the limited English proficiency.

In many cases there are no staff available who speak the student's native language. In addition, appropriate assessment instruments are often not available. For example appropriate assessment instruments do not exist that assess the listening comprehension skill of a student who speaks Korean. Further, while tests of auditory discrimination are usually part of a learning disabilities evaluation, it is usually inappropriate to give one in English to limited English proficiency students, since they are being asked to distinguish English language sounds with which they are not familiar. More appropriate, Professor Jones suggested, would be the use of non-language auditory acuity tests.

Once a student's basic auditory and visual acuity has been tested, the next step in assessing a student is to listen to him or her tell how he or she experiences the problem. This may provide a better diagnostic description than would a standardized test score, even if one does not find out if the student has a specific learning disability. Professor Jones suggested a series of questions to ask a student who is having difficulty in a class. Talking with the student about the problem allows the interviewer to get some sense of the student's language proficiency, at least in English. The student should be asked the same basic learning disabilities screening questions as one would ask a native English speaker, concerning family history, history of school achievement, whether current problems are generalized or erratic, etc. Also, the student should be given a chance to explain what he or she thinks his or her difficulties are and what is causing them.

With probing, some students can tell an instructor in which ways materials must be presented for them to understand information. For example, some students prefer to read and write in English, despite their limited proficiency, because they have little or no experience in academic reading and writing in their native language. Other students may need the instructor to write on the board or need a clear outline.

There is evidence that language-impaired students have difficulty solving problems that require generating and considering multiple hypotheses. Many of these students have organizational problems, both on a verbal and a non-verbal level. This kind of information can serve as a useful guide for the instructor. The instructor can teach strategies for learning, such as how to create an organized conceptual framework to cut down on the need for rote memorization and replace it with organized, meaningful memory. Also, limited language skill students often require that information be presented in a more linguistically simple way.

For their part, students need to learn how they learn and what kinds of questions to ask the instructor. Tutors must be trained to teach students these skills, and not only course subject matter.

Professor Jones spoke of considerations in evaluating student progress in class. The instructor, she suggested, must ask herself what the goal of the class is, what information she wants the students to master, and how students with limited Englsih language skills can demonstrate their knowledge. Often tests can be presented in a

linguistically simpler way but cover the same content. Further, some students can be given an oral exam, rather than an essay. In addition to suggestions for the individual instructor and for tutors, Professor Jones spoke of the need for coordination of all services on campus.

SECOND CONFERENCE

Friday, March 27, 1987

Workshop 1

Implications of Theories and Research Findings for Instruction and Accommodation of Learning Disabled College Students

Presenter: Professor Jeanne S. Chall
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Professor Chall discussed the relationship between reading, language skills, writing and spelling. She pointed out that the problem of learning disabilities is not limited to public universities or colleges with large "inner city" populations. In fact, learning disabilities are found among students from a wide spectrum of backgrounds, and at all kinds of colleges, including, she mentioned, her own, Harvard.

Although definitions of learning disabilities vary, Dr. Chall offered the following definition: functioning in reading and writing below what one's level should be, based on cognitive ability. In other words, a learning disabled student is "smarter" than his or her school performance.

Professor Chall referred to her stage theory of reading development and explained how it can be useful in understanding both the reading and writing difficulties of youth and adults, although the theory was based on an analysis of children's reading development alone.

Before distinguishing the stages of reading development, she listed three requirements for reading at all stages.

1. Language and knowledge
2. Cognition: reasoning and thinking skills
3. Reading skills such as recognizing and sounding out words, finding main points, and grammar.

Although these must be present at all reading stages, they change, and the relationship between them changes as one goes from lower to higher reading stages, so that, in fact reading is a very different process at different stages.

She then defined and described each of the four stages in her well-known theory of reading. Professor Chall claimed that the major problem in reading for community college students is that the average student is at and sometimes below the eighth grade reading level. She cited studies which showed, for example, that 20% of California community college students were reading at or below the fifth grade level and that only 40% of first year students at a midwestern state community college read "adeptly," well enough to read a college textbook. Less than 20% of Black students and even fewer Hispanic students were at the "adept" level. The "adept" level corresponds to Stage 4.

Professor Chall stated that students reading at or below a sixth or seventh grade level need expert help from trained professionals. They need more help than the subject area instructor or a peer tutor, for example, can give. However students reading at around the eighth grade level can be greatly aided by subject area instructors, who can, with the correct methods, help them make the transition from eighth to twelfth grade reading in a relatively short period of time.

To explain how this can be done, she first discussed the characteristics distinguishing eighth from twelfth grade development of the three basic requirements in reading described above.

1. Language and knowledge: twelfth grade texts require language that is complex, abstract and technical. Doing assignments from these texts requires bringing to the text much background knowledge and vocabulary, which are not as necessary for most ninth grade reading level texts.
2. Cognition: twelfth grade texts require a greater ability to read critically, and more highly developed cognitive and problem solving skills.
3. Reading skills: More advanced reading skills are needed, including greater speed, efficiency, knowing what the important ideas are, and metacognitive skills such as knowing whether one is comprehending or not.

Professor Chall stressed that these three areas are interrelated. For example, in a literate society, the more intelligent one is, generally the better a reader one is. However, the converse is also true--the better the reader the more intelligent the person. She argued that the ability to read contributes to intelligence. In other words, good reading skills improve the ability to think. There is evidence that when a person goes from the eighth to the twelfth grade reading level his or her thinking

changes in ways corresponding to the differences in the kinds of reading done at those levels. Therefore, content area teachers at the college can help their student to read and improve their reading by helping them to think better about the subject matter. In fact, many of the current procedures for teaching thinking and teaching higher level reading are quite similar.

Of the three basic requirements of reading, she placed greatest emphasis on the first one. There is strong evidence that in general, and not just in reading, knowledge of a subject area is the greatest factor in expertise. She also cited specific evidence that what most distinguishes a novice from an expert reader is background knowledge and vocabulary. Even for a generally good reader, the areas in which one reads most quickly and effectively are the areas one knows well.

Based upon this evidence and her analysis of it, Professor Chall argued that general reading skills courses that are not related to any particular subject matter are not sufficient. Reading is not just a technique or process; it must have content. Therefore, the subject area instructor is in a unique position to improve students' reading by helping them to deal better with texts of specific content. They can prepare students for reading the text by presenting necessary background knowlege and vocabulary in advance. Some specific suggestions included:

- o List vocabulary words on the board and discuss them in advance.
- o Tell the students what the important ideas in an upcoming reading assignment are.
- o The instructor should ask questions in advance of the reading which will help students see where the main ideas in the chapter are.
- o Students can be taught some "tricks" for reading and writing in each subject area. Instructors can best do this by modeling for students how they can approach reading and writing in each subject area. This should include the following procedure in all classes: The first day, the students should bring the text to class and should be "initiated" into the book. What is the author's style? Where are the main ideas? How should it be read? Should they read the summary first? Subject headings first?

In addition to her theoretical analysis and these practical suggestions, Professor Chall discussed some of the social policy issues implicitly raised by her analysis. She expressed a conviction that all our youth must learn to read at the

twelfth grade level. In 1940 few jobs required more than an eighth grade reading level. Today many more jobs require a twelfth grade reading level. Even many jobs that do not call for reading on a twelfth grade level require higher reasoning, which comes in part from higher reading. Also, in order to be truly equal participants in the affairs and decisions of our society people must be able to read such things as articles on world affairs in Time, Newsweek or the New York Times, which are difficult for a person with only an eighth grade reading level. She insisted that this is not an elitist, but a democractic postion: What's good for the college professor's daughter or son is not too good for anyone's child.

She went on to say that the reasons for the low literacy levels in our society are complex, and many are beyond the responsibility of the college faculty. However, there is much that they can do. When students learn to read better in any area, they begin to find reading less torturous; this makes them more independent in their learning and gives them greater power over the written word, and it gives them a way to continue to learn when they leave college.

In concluding, Professor Chall offered a summary of her major points, which were the following:

1. Remedial reading is important, and should be done by trained experts.
2. Students reading below sixth or eighth grade level need much more systematic work on their thinking skills.
3. Using easier textbooks is one possible approach, but it is a temporary and limited approach because: (a) there are simply not enough of them, and (b) they do not help bring students up to the higher reading level that they need in our society.
4. Students should be taught some "tricks" in each subject area course; these are best taught by subject area instructors who can model these "tricks" for the students. Subject area faculty must be oriented towards doing this and helped to learn methods.
5. The most important way to help students is to help them to expand their vocabulary and knowledge in the subject they are reading.

Workshop 2

Innovative Teaching Strategies for the Learning Disabled

Presenter: Craig Michaels
Coordinator of Learning Disabilities Projects, Human Resources Center
National Center for Employment of the Disabled.

Craig Michaels began his talk by raising the issue of whether there can be good teaching without learning. Mr. Michaels expressed the view that if students are not learning, it is the responsibility of the teacher to change his or her teaching so that students do learn. Although this principle is accepted at the elementary and secondary school levels, it is not widely accepted at the college level.

Mr. Michaels proceeded to offer a set of specific suggestions for college instructors of learning disabled students. However, he stressed that the suggestions would be useful for all students; a good teacher for the learning disabled is a good teacher for any student. Proposed techniques must also be easy for the instructor to implement; if they take too much time the instructor is less likely actually to use them.

Many of the suggested teaching techniques concerned providing organization and structure for students.

- All teachers should have the course syllabus available to students prior to the start of class. This would help organize the course for students, and is essential for those learning disabled students who qualify for recordings for the blind. They need to know what text will be used in advance in order to get it on tape.
- Expanding the syllabus to include learning objectives and specification of how students will be evaluated or tested.
- Before each topic and each lesson, students should be told what they will be learning and what the important points are.
- Many learning disabled students have great trouble articulating the "main idea" or summarizing. At the end of each topic and lesson, the instructor should summarize the key points. He or she should try to elicit the main ideas from the students, but should do this for them if necessary. This will serve as a model for some, who may learn how to do it themselves.
- Review the main points of the previous class at the beginning of each class.

Many students have trouble knowing what to write down during the class and from the text. They may try to write down everything or may write down the wrong things. The above techniques may help them learn to find the main points, but in addition Mr. Michaels suggested that the instructor should help them learn how to study from a textbook, and offered the following specific technique:

- o Teach the students to read the chapter prior to the lecture and take notes along one side of the paper. Then in class as they listen to the instructor they should find the place in the notes where the teacher is and on the other side of the paper, next to that part in the notes from the text, write down anything the instructor adds, or makes notes of what the instructor stressed, disagreed with, etc.

Regarding modification of exams for learning disabled and other disabled (such as blind) students, the general guiding principle should be to distinguish between whether the student has learned the subject matter of the course and whether he/she has some disability. He presented examples of some reasonable accommodations that can be made in testing:

- o Give untimed tests. Mark down where the student was at the normal time limit, and then let him or her finish the test.
- o Provide alternate test forms.
- o Learning disabled students who cannot fill out computer answer forms should be allowed to circle the answers on the test itself.
- o Especially for math, analyze how the student did the problem and give partial credit for correct solution mode even if the answer was wrong.
- o Simplify directions.
- o On a case-by-case basis, aids and assistance devices may sometimes be provided, such as a multiplication table.

In concluding, Mr. Michaels stressed again that learning disabled students are not very different from other community college students. The good teaching techniques that help the former will help the latter. The difference is that while the non-learning disabled student may "make it" anyway, the learning disabled student cannot succeed without the instructor's help.

Workshop 3

Understanding a Learning Disabilities Evaluation and its Implications

Presenter: Professor Jeffrey Rosen
City College of the City University of New York
Assistant Dean of the Division of Social Science, Professor of Psychology, and Director of the City College Learning Disabilities Service and Graduate Training in Neuropsychology.

Professor Rosen described the learning disabilities service he directs at City College of CUNY, where evaluations are performed. This is a training service for doctoral students in the Clinical Psychology and Cognition Ph.D. programs at City College. From four to six students per year participate in the service, supervised by three faculty. Referrals are received from anywhere in the CUNY system, for example from community college faculty. The person making the referral receives an evaluation of what is wrong with the student and also recommendations to promote academic improvement.

A minority are self-referred. Most referrals are made by counselors and teachers. A common reason for referring a student is that a strength is discerned despite the fact that the student is on the verge of failing. Approximately 500 college students from all over CUNY have been seen since 1978 when the service began. All students seen are experiencing profound academic difficulties.

The following statistics are representative of the people who have been seen by the service and are not representative of the CUNY student population. The percentages reported by Professor Rosen (see below) added up to more than 100% because students evaluated often belong to more than one of the categories described.

Approximately 10% of students evaluated have academic difficulties associated with hard neuropathology, including epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, tumor and, most commonly, closed head injuries, e.g., concussion and coma. Available school records are examined to see whether there is any precipitous drop-off that could not have been predicted other than as a consequence of that particular neurological insult. In carrying out a clinical evaluation it is necessary to rule out an acute process, i.e., "something that is bad and getting worse" for which there has to be some medical intervention.

Approximately 10% do not have hard neuropathology but need medical attention because they have a systemic illness, e.g., asthma, anemia, mononucleosis, etc. which has been undiagnosed and is interfering with their cognitive processing. Many of these individuals do not have access to health care delivery systems in the same ways that other people do. After the condition has been treated and goes away, the student thinks better and academic performance improves.

Approximately 15% have sensory impairments in hearing or in vision. A very detailed evaluation of these functions is conducted to rule out sensory impairment as a reason for academic failure.

Approximately 20% have moderate to severe psychopathology such as a profound anxiety disorder, which affects ability to sustain attention and concentration. Affective disorders are also seen, frequently depression, which impacts upon memory and concentration. Once the psychological problem is rectified, it is possible for the academic problem to disappear.

Approximately 25% have academic difficulties associated with substance abuse the most common of which is alcohol, although abuse of angel dust, heroin and cocaine is seen. A very mild learning disability such as dyslexia can be severely exacerbated by marajuana so that performance on a reading task will decline significantly.

Approximately 40% have probably been developmentally disabled from the first year of life. They have developmental learning disabilities of the following four types:

1. Dyslexia: a specific learning disability associated with reading problems. There are three to six different types of dyslexia. They are all related to reading problems but come about for different reasons, in the same way as a fever can be generated by different causes. The characteristic most frequently associated with dyslexia in people's minds is letter/spatial reversal, for example mirror image letters and words. In fact, this is one of the least prevalent forms of dyslexia.

   The most frequent form of dyslexia involves an impairment in phonological processing. This can be describe as a "tin ear for language." Even at the age of two years old there is difficulty discriminating between speech sounds, but nothing that an audiologist could detect. Such individuals have

difficulty processing acoustic information rapidly enough to understand everything someone says to them. It may seem that the individual is not paying attention but the problem is one of language processing. Besides having reading problems, students report having difficulty understanding what is being talked about in class. They can understand if the rate of speech is slowed down or if speech is organized into preset patterns. Dyslexics with a phonological impairment may have difficulty using the right words for the ideas they want to express and may show circumlocutions. These problems also show up in writing, which can be poor as a result of trying hard to express meaning while lacking the right words. Such students may have the meaning they want to communicate but may lack its phonological representation. In reading, a person with phonological dyslexia may mispronounce words.

Another form of dyslexia, which is rare, involves semantic substitutions in reading. Such individuals can read words correctly out loud but their comprehension is poor.

2. Dyscalculia: primary difficulties in math especially in computation involving an underlying logic of spatial extension.
3. Agraphia: problem with writing that does not co-occur with a reading problem. This is very rare outside of a neurology service.
4. A history of hyperactivity/attention deficit--such students may not be hyperactive anymore (although they may be fidgety), but have difficulty with concentration and organization. They have difficulty thinking through a sequence. In writing, spelling, grammar and vocabulary may be excellent but there will be an absence of organization of sentences and paragraphs.

Fifty percent of the people seen are academically deficient. Everybody who is learning disabled is academically deficient but not everybody who is academically deficient is learning disabled. There are many people who for a variety of reasons did not learn. Some reasons may be truancy, institutional indifference and poor teaching. For various reasons, these people simply have never acquired the lexical information that they need, including vocabulary, orthographic and phonological correspondences, syntax, and organization necessary for academic functioning. It is not that they cannot acquire these skills - it is just that they have not acquired them

or they have been miseducated. For example, an individual who is taught to read without any knowledge of phonics may not be able to sound out unfamiliar words. The errors such an individual might make might resemble dyslexic errors but the individual may only be miseducated rather than dyslexic. It is very important to distinguish between deficiency and disability. Someone who is deficient may be instructed using standard procedures but will need a good deal of nurturance.

After the evaluation is complete, a treatment plan is developed based on what are considered to be the most important reasons for the student's academic failure. A treatment plan could involve medical referrals, opthalmology, or psychological consultation. Usually a series of interrelated treatments is planned to deal with the interrelated bases of the academic problem.

There seems to be an interdependent relationship between reading and writing abilities where reading ability can be a great limiting factor on the level of writing ability that can be achieved. Most people who have difficulty with reading have difficulty with writing. It is very rare to have difficulty with writing but no difficulty with reading.

"Situational impairments" may account for academic failure. For example, poor test performance may be caused by test anxiety. Some people suffer from extreme anxiety when they have to present orally. Such situational impairments can be dealt with by stress management and desensitizing.

Learning Disabilities Consultation Activities

Consultation concerning learning disabilities was offered to participants at the December 1986 conference. The purpose of consultation, provided by Dr. Dolores Perin, Project Co-Director, a learning disabilities specialist, was to maximize workshop training and to further the development of campus learning disabilities specialists and community college faculty. Participants were offered the opportunity to consult by telephone on several occasions regarding specific problems learning disabled students were manifesting on campus. Of special concern were problems presented by low achieving students who had not been diagnosed as learning disabled, but there was some suspicion that there might in fact be a disability that was hindering learning. While conference participants expressed an interest in the consultation service, a number indicated informally that they would prefer an opportunity to case-conference specific students in a setting that afforded the opportunity to interact with peers on other campuses. One telephone consultation was provided, as described below, and a pilot case-conference workshop was run, also described below, in response to conference participants' stated needs. Both of these activities had positive effects. In particular, the case-conference workshop was felt to be so sucessful that this concept was incorporated into a proposal for further inservice training activities written by CASE/IRDOE, which has been funded (VEA # 153-88-5173).

Case Conference Workshop held at CASE/IRDOE on March 19, 1987

Attended by: Professor Frances Singh (Assistant Professor of English, Hostos Community College)

Professor Bette Kalash (Professor of Developmental Skills, Borough of Manhattan Community College)

Professor Abraham Kuppersmith (Professor of English, Borough of Manhattan Community College)

Myrna Pagan (Co-Coordinator of Learning Disabilities Center, Special Education Department, Bronx Community College)

Phyllis Ruttenburg (Co-Coordinator of Learning Disabilities Center, Special Education Department, Bronx Community College)

This was a three-hour session organized and led by Dr. Dolores Perin, Project Co-Director. Members of the Advisory Committee were consulted in the planning stages. CUNY campus Coordinators for the Disabled who were on the Advisory Committee talked to faculty who were interested in attending such a workshop. The workshop was attended by five faculty from three CUNY community colleges. An additional workshop participant, Professor Golda Solomon, Speech and Theater Arts Department, Borough of Manhattan Community College, had taken part in planning the session but was unable to attend because of illness.

In organizing and planning their case conference presentations, participants were asked to bring a description of a student or a situation on which they required consultation concerning learning disabilities. Three participants described students and two described situations existing in the college.

The workshop began with each member of the group introducing her/himself and making a brief statement of the case or situation she/he had brought in to discuss. Following this introduction, each case was presented in depth. Dr. Perin's goal was to provide information on learning disabilities relevant to each case, and to facilitate discussion and comments from the group. Each case presentation culminated in a set of recommendations. Examples of several cases are summarized below.

Professor Singh, who teaches remedial writing and reading skills to English as a Second Language students, presented a case of a student whom she had taught in two separate courses. The student had taken the CUNY writing test approximately six times before passing. Her work had been marked in varying ways by different readers - some felt the writing on the tests was adequate and others did not. The student, a female in her forties, was born in Costa Rica and had lived in the U.S. for approximately thirty years. She spoke English better than other Spanish-dominant students. What made Professor Singh wonder whether the student was learning disabled or not was the great discrepancy between her oral and written language skills and her spelling error patterns. The errors were inconsistent and generally non-phonetic. For example, "what" was spelled at various times as "wat," hwat," and "wach." "Who" would be spelled as "hwo" and "with" would be spelled as "whit" or "wiht." Professor Singh had observed problems with the letter "h" in the spelling of many words and wondered if this was a first language intrusion, since the sound represented by "h" does not exist in Spanish. Professor Singh also noted that the writing of this student was poorly organized and divergent in nature. She shared writing samples with the group.

Recommendations were: (1) Referral to the International Center for the Disabled in Manhattan for a learning disabilities evaluation (the college does not have facilities for testing); this, according to Professor Kuppersmith, is a free service. If this referral were not implemented: (2) Referral to Dr. Jacqueline Jones' learning disabilities clinic at Lehman College for evaluation and tutoring during the summer months. Dr. Jones was a speaker at the December 5th Conference and in her presentation described the activities of this clinic (part of a Masters training program at Lehman). (3) Talk to other instructors who are teaching this student to find out whether she is also being perceived as an atypical learner in other classes. This would enable Professor Singh to have a clearer picture of the student.

During the case discussion, other participants commented that they had encountered students with similar patterns: the spelling was similar, and the writing was fragmented and divergent. The group agreed that students who fail the CUNY writing exam twice should be flagged as possible learning disabled students and be given special services by the college. Interest was expressed in knowing the extent of incidence of learning disabilities in community colleges. Participants felt that

the incidence was very high (one felt it was at lest 35%) and that teachers were not qualified to identify and teach such students. One participant felt that learning disabled students should be taught in separate classes and should enter regular classes only when ready. In other words, this participant felt that a "special education" stream would be useful in the community college.

Myrna Pagan and Phyllis Ruttenberg presented the case of a male ESL student whom Ms. Pagan had been tutoring for three years. He was able to memorize information extremely well but made persistent spelling errors. He had memorized "all the spelling rules" but continued to make errors. At the same time, he had made enormous progress in the quality of his writing. In other words, he presented structural written language problems but in the semantic area he had shown good progress. It seemed that he was constantly being penalized for his spelling errors and this would affect his ability to graduate.

Recommendations: (1) This student needs an advocate who can explain to his instructors that he is learning disabled and that he should not be penalized for his spelling errors. An accommodation to the disability needs to be made so that spelling requirements are waived. (2) Teach spelling by multisensory techniques (this is an area of expertise of Professor Kuppersmith).

Ms. Pagan also briefly described another student who had extremely poor memory and who appeared to be "word blind." He was a native English speaker who displayed an articulation problem (apparent insertions of the sound "l" in many words). In addition, the student appeared to have visual problems: his eyes were often red, and there was some discharge. Ms. Pagan felt that this student was learning disabled but that the tests she administered were not sufficient to identify this. She needed a throrough evaluation in order to understand his problem better. Bronx Community College does not have facilities for such an evaluation.

Recommendation: Refer this student for testing to either (a) The International Center for the Disabled, or (b) SUNY Optometric Center.

Professor Bette Kalash and Abraham Kuppersmith jointly presented a situation concerning learning disabilities in their college. Rather than recommendations, they required feedback and wanted to network with faculty from other colleges interested in dealing with learning disabilities. With Professor Solomon, mentioned above, they are involved in various activities at Borough of Manhattan Community

College to address special learning needs. They described their activities, summarized as follows:

1. Helping students to identify themselves as potentially learning disabled, or at least requiring special academic help. A questionnaire was being compiled which would be used at intake. Information derived from questionnaires would then be disseminated to the students' instructors. Problematic issues which were discussed included: (a) the question of the legality of such a form, i.e., possible invasion of privacy, and (b) the question of whether it would be unethical to disseminate information to instructors regarding students' learning problems; the need for a waiver. The need to clear this activity with the college administrators was emphasized. Other participants described students whom they had worked with who were adamant that their disabilities not be known to others. They felt stigmatized and wished the information to be kept from instructors.
2. Forming a faculty committee to deal with the needs of possible and/or already identified learning disabled students. A letter had been sent to Borough of Manhattan Community College faculty by Professors Solomon, Kalash and Kuppersmith, based on information contained in a booklet on learning disabilities in college students written by Sandra LaPorta and Kate Garnett, included with training materials at the December 5th Conference. The letter asked faculty whether they had students who had certain problems (as described in the LaPorta and Garnett booklet) and if they did, whether they would like to attend a faculty meeting to discuss them. Twenty-five faculty members expressed interest and fourteen were able to attend the meeting (others had schedule conflicts). Diverse disciplines including microbiology were represented at the meeting. Apparently, faculty felt overwhelmed by the extent of learning problems among their students. Professors Solomon, Kalash and Kuppersmith were planning to hold a workshop for these faculty members on the topic of accommodating learning problems in the classroom. Based on faculty interest, they were forming a committee called "Professional Association for the Education of the Atypical Learner." They stated that the term "atypical learner" had

been used by Dr. Jones in her December 5th presentation and they felt that it was an appropriate one for them to use.

3. Professor Kuppersmith had plans to produce a videotape that would demonstrate problems that learning disabled community college students have. He wanted this tape to be shown to incoming students at orientation.
4. There were plans for producing a newsletter for Borough of Manhattan Community College on the topic of learning disabilities. This would "appeal to faculty's sense of fustration."
5. Professor Kuppersmith is developing a "scale of dysgraphia," which he presented in draft form at the session. General categories of the "scale," which would be used by teachers to identify dysgraphic students, include the following: handwriting, capitalization, confusion of similar words, poor word choice, spatial confusion (e.g., on/under; to/from, etc), omission of words and phrases, repetitions (e.g., "I left the book on the on the table."), lack of variety in syntax (simple sentences), punctuation, generally repetitive writing (ideas stated over and over), difficulty with transition to the next idea, etc.

Participants expressed positive comments concerning the session on its conclusion. They felt that the small group format allowed the rare opportunity for in-depth consideration of concrete problems and cases. They found it useful to interact with peers from different colleges. They saw the session as a worthwhile activity and expressed interest in attending similar sessions.

Learning Disabilities Telephone Consultation

A telephone consultation with Professor Jane Broff, an adjunct instructor in algebra in the Developmental Skills Department of New York City Technical College, was conducted on 2/26/87, with a follow-up on 3/5/87. This consultation was set up with the help of Joann Mischianti, campus Coordinator of the Disabled at NYC Technical College/CUNY, who is on the Advisory Committee of this project.

Professor Broff described a student, whose major was Hotel Administration, who was not participating in class and who had a very low test score. The student was repeating math for the third time. The instructor was not sure if the student was learning disabled and said that she was hoping, through the consultation, to learn more about the disability. The student's handwritting was "not bad." He had a "slow manner about him," and was "physically immature." He looked more like a high school student than one attending college. He lacked self-confidence. He often stayed after class to talk to the teacher. He expressed anxiety about his math grade. His test score was 52%. On an arithmetic test, he answered 18 of 25 questions correctly, and on an algebra test, 1 of 10 questions were correct. Professor Broff needed help in determining what was wrong with this student. Although she had a special education background, she required further training in learning disabilities.

Dr. Perin described the nature of learning disabilities, focusing on manifestations in college students.

Recommendations made:

1. See Joann Mischianti to borrow materials from the December 5th Conference on learning disabilities. These materials describe learning disabilities and their manifestations in college students.
2. Find out more about the student. Ask him questions concerning his background: did he have any learning problems in high school; how is he doing in other programs in the college; is anyone in his family learning disabled.
3. Speak to other instructors who have this student and find out whether he is presenting atypical patterns in their classroom.

4. Analyze his errors on both exams and homework. Try to determine whether he has an inconsistent pattern of weaknesses and strengths or whether he is performing poorly in all areas of math. Focus on weak areas in instruction, if individualization is possible.
5. If, based on information given by phone on the nature of learning disabilities and written information provided at the Conference, the student is suspected to be learning disabled, refer him for testing and tutoring.

In the follow-up consultation, one week later, Professor Broff reported that she had spoken to the student's instructors in reading and writing, and to his previous math teacher. He was felt to be more articulate than some other students, but slower socially. Instructors felt that the student knew more than his work showed. He lacked concentration and had poor retention of information. He had taken the writing course four times and was still failing.

Professor Broff spoke to the student and learned that he had had special education in high school. His errors were common types and found in all areas of his math work. He was retested and scored 11 points higher. Professor Broff commented that many of her students have a similar pattern of performance and she wondered whether it was possible that they could all be learning disabled.

She said that she had gotten a much fuller picture by speaking to the student's other instructors, and had learned about learning disabilities as a result of the consultation. She felt that she was now more sensitive to the student's needs.

Further recommendations: (1) Ask student to consider using a tape recorder in class to compensate for his poor concentration. (2) Try to set up peer tutoring.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Program Evaluation

Summary of Evaluation Ratings and Comments: December 1986 Inservice Training Conference

Project staff comments on evaluation data

Participants expressed a favorable reaction to this conference. They reported, both informally and through their ratings and comments on the evaluation forms they were asked to complete, that they were pleased with the expertise of the workshop presenters, with the format of the conference and with the opportunity the conference gave them to interact with and learn from their colleagues engaged in similar endeavors on other community college campuses. Overall, comments indicated that a better understanding was achieved of:

- the nature of learning disabilities and how they can be diagnosed
- the variability in profiles of learning disabled community college students
- specific strategies that can be used by an instructor to intervene in problems manifested by learning disabled students.

Below is the evaluation questionnaire completed by participants at the end of the conference. Following this is a summary of evaluation ratings and comments.

The Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York

Center for Advanced Study in Education
Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education
33 West 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10036
(212) 221-3895, -3896

EVALUATION: December 5, 1987

To assist the Institute in evaluating this conference, we would like you to complete this form anonymously. Please circle your response.

1a. The workshop "Applying learning disability research in the community college classroom" was:

1	2	3	4	5
inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent

1b. The research findings on learning disability were clearly presented:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

1c. This workshop helped me become aware of characteristics of learning disability in community college students:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

1d. List some useful ideas that emanated from this workshop.

1e. What additional information would you have liked?

2a The workshop "Identifying learning disabled students in the classroom: Typical profiles" was:

1	2	3	4	5
inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent

2b. This workshop will help me become more aware of patterns of learning disability:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

2c. This workshop provided practical suggestions for helping learning disabled students in the classroom:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

2d. List some useful ideas that emanated from the workshop.

2e. What additional information would you have liked?

3a. The workshop "Distinguishing language problems from learning disability in students with limited proficiency in English" was:

1	2	3	4	5
inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent

3b. This workshop helped me better understand the problems of learning disability in community college students of minimal proficiency in English:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

3c. This workshop contained practical suggestions for screening, diagnosing and accommodating learning disability in limited English proficiency students:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

3d. List some useful ideas that emanated from this workshop.

3e. What additional information would you have liked?

---

4. To what extent did the conference meet your expectations?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						to a great extent

5. How would you rate the conference as a useful and productive experience?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all to a great extent

6. What did you like most about the conference?

7. What did you like least about the conference?

8. What would you like to see included in the second conference?

Demographic Information

9. For how many years have your worked in a community college:

_____ 0-2 years _____ 6-10 years
_____ 3-5years _____ 11-15 years
_____ 16+ years

10. What department do you work in? _____

11. What is your present position? _____

12. What is your highest education and level completed?

_____ Undergraduate Degree

_____ Master's Degree

_____ Doctoral Degree

13. Are you providing services to learning disabled students on campus?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please specify _____

_____

Conference: Successful Approaches to Learning Disabilities in the Community College
December 5, 1986

SUMMARY OF RATINGS AND COMMENTS

Note: Numbers in parentheses are frequencies of ratings.

1a. The workshop "Applying learning disability research in the community college classroom" was:

	1 inadequate	2 fair	3 good	4 very good	5 excellent
Freq.	(1)	(3)	(16)	(12)	(5)

Pecentage of ratings 3 or higher = 89% (n = 37)

1b. The research findings on learning disability were clearly presented:

	1 to a very small extent	2 to a small extent	3 to a moderate extent	4 to a large extent	5 to a very large extent
Freq.	(1)	(3)	(14)	(11)	(8)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 90% (n = 37)

1c. This workshop helped me become aware of characteristics of learning disability in community college students:

	1 to a very small extent	2 to a small extent	3 to a moderate extent	4 to a large extent	5 to a very large extent
Freq:	(3)	(13)	(13)	(6)	(2)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 56% (n = 37)

1d. List some useful ideas that emanated from this workshop.

Diagnosis and Testing

- o Alternative approaches to diagnosis of LD
- o Not to use general IQ tests
- o Use of certain tests to eliminate commmon notions of LD
- o Use of criterion-referenced tests
- o Helping students to identify themselves

Nature of LD and Reading Problems

- o Ways of viewing and understanding reading problems
- o Various theoretical positions presented
- o LD is not a well-defined diagnostic entity

Programmatic Applications

- o Identify prerequisite skills needed to learn a particular course
- o Different tasks need different basic skills, which need to be taught
- o Focusing on specific skills
- o Practical, pragmatic approach suggested
- o Using different modalities and strategies

General vs. Immediate Causes of LD

- o Underlying general cause of LD is not useful for the classroom
- o Emphasis on immediate causes (4 responses)

Relation of Language Skills to LD

- o LD students should continue to work on language
- o Language skills and specific skills are crucial to improving learning
- o Linguistic influences on IQ
- o Emphasis on importance of language systems

Organizational Implementation

- o Forming a committee at my college (2 responses)

1e. What additional information would you have liked?

Programmatic Applications

- o More concrete suggestions; nitty gritty; how to set up specifics; specifics on what to do in a classroom; application techniques
- o How to modify teaching in light of research; information on how to apply research data; examples of classroom strategy from research in academia (2 responses)

Testing and Policy Questions

- o How to accommodate students to required CUNY tests
- o What to do with repeaters who don't pass CUNY Reading Test and are in large classroom setting

Available Resources

- o How to be aware of useful research with classroom relevance
- o Where to visit existing LD resource centers or programs

Diagnostic Materials

- o Specific criterion-referenced materials

Relation of Specific Skills to Overall Effectiveness

- o What specific skill improvements lead to significantly improved effectiveness

Information on the Students

- o Data on community college students
- o Like to listen to some LD students who made it

Miscellaneous

- o Would like written summary of the labeling school research

---

2a The workshop "Identifying learning disabled students in the classroom: Typical profiles" was:

	1 inadequate	2 fair	3 good	4 very good	5 excellent
Freq:	(0)	(1)	(6)	(20)	(9)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 97% (n=36)

2b. This workshop will help me become more aware of patterns of learning disability:

	1 to a very small extent	2 to a small extent	3 to a moderate extent	4 to a large extent	5 to a very large extent
Freq.	(0)	(2)	(13)	(14)	(8)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 95% (n = 37)

2c. This workshop provided practical suggestions for helping learning disabled students in the classroom:

	1 to a very small extent	2 to a small extent	3 to a moderate extent	4 to a large extent	5 to a very large extent
Freq.	(0)	(2)	(7)	(20)	(8)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 95% (n = 37)

2d. List some useful ideas that emanated from the workshop.

Profiles and descriptions of LD students

- o Specific student profiles showed how varied they are; unpredictable profiles
- o LD problems as a matter of degree, not kind.
- o Fresh insights into LD

Useful Strategies for the Classroom Instructor

- o Excellent suggestions
- o Specific examples were helpful
- o Methods for helping students
- o Classroom tips and instructional techniques

Useful Strategies for the Classroom Instructor (continued)

- o Multimedia presentation
- o Speaking with instructors about students and coming up with instructional strategies
- o Going over vocabulary
- o Windows
- o Color coding (2 responses)
- o Memory techniques
- o Idea of restructuring the curriculum
- o The three ways of trying
- o Giving course outlines
- o Reveal the pattern of my lecture; structure and organization is needed.
- o Public statement of support, philosophy and intentions
- o Change teaching style
- o Make public your understanding of different learning styles

Use of Peer Group

- o Peer counseling; peer involvement
- o Rap groups (3 responses)
- o LD support peer groups (2 responses)
- o Committee work

Developing the Active Role of the Student

- o Students have to learn compensation strategies, self knowledge
- o Ask students to identify their needs
- o Students can teach me
- o Let students give suggestions

Organizational/Institutional Suggestions

- o Suggestions for institutions

2e. What additional information would you have liked?

More Specifics on Identification and Assessment

- o More concrete suggestions (2 responses)
- o Very specific programs that have been successful
- o More coping strategies
- o How to figure out what to do for whom
- o How to decide which tasks to teach
- o More specific answers to specific problems which students have with specific tasks
- o More information on identifying LD students and on typical profiles
- o Assessment instruments for LD adults
- o How to provide early identification of LD students as freshmen
- o Simulation: showing participants what LD people experience

Miscellaneous

- o Restructuring curriculum, like the Queensborough model
- o More profiles of typical or "mainstream"-type LD college students.
- o More on teaching reading and study skills to LD community college students
- o More on the possibility that "LD's" can appear in normal learners at different times and that individualized teaching must be used with all teaching

---

3a. The workshop "Distinguishing language problems from learning disability in students with limited proficiency in English" was:

	1 inadequate	2 fair	3 good	4 very good	5 excellent
Freq.	(0)	(4)	(6)	(15)	(9)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 88% (n = 34)

3b. This workshop helped me better understand the problems of learning disability in community college students of minimal proficiency in English:

	1 to a very small extent	2 to a small extent	3 to a moderate extent	4 to a large extent	5 to a very large extent
Freq.	(0)	(6)	(8)	(11)	(9)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 82% (n = 34)

3c. This workshop contained practical suggestions for screening, diagnosing and accommodating learning disability in limited English proficiency students:

	1 to a very small extent	2 to a small extent	3 to a moderate extent	4 to a large extent	5 to a very large extent
Freq.	(0)	(3)	(13)	(12)	(6)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 91% (n = 34)

3d. List some useful ideas that emanated from this workshop.

Ways to Diagnose and Get Information from Students

- o Student interview for diagnosis
- o The questions for students (6 responses)
- o Student self evaluation (2 responses)
- o Getting history from student
- o Testing LD students in their native language

Working with Instructors

- o Questions for instructors (3 responses)
- o Ways of speaking to instructors
- o Getting sensitivity and cooperation from instructors

Confirmation of My Own Experience and Views

- o Awareness of lack of proficiency in native language
- o The first real acknowledgement I've seen or heard of what was called "semi-lingual"
- o Confirmed that we must look at total language picture
- o Verified my own ESL counseling experiences

Miscellaneous

- o Great suggestions for working with students in general
- o Interorganizational dialogue
- o Bibliography
- o Tutoring vs. cognitive strategies
- o Hearing and vision problems

3e. What additional information would you have liked?

More on Diagnosis and Prescription

- o A little more in terms of diagnosis (2 responses)
- o Additional suggestions for screening
- o More specific breakdown of skills deficits of ESL students
- o More specific methods and tactics
- o How to figure out what to do for whom
- o Difference between normals and limited English language proficiency
- o Specific suggestions or references on how to improve organizational skills; more on organizational skills
- o How to teach students to be logical

LD Students and CUNY Standards and Requirements

- o It's been stated that learning a foreign language for an LD student may be nearly impossible. It was suggested a waiver may even be warranted. What's that mean for ESL LD students?
- o (I'm dreaming) Ways to fight the system around requirements!

Miscellaneous

- o More of anything and everything the speaker had to say
- o Ways to sensitize faculty on this issue
- o Would like to visit Lehman or talk to Professor Jones

---

4. To what extent did the conference meet your expectations?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Not at all						to a great extent
Freq.	(0)	(0)	(2)	(7)	(10)	(14)	(4)

Percentage of ratings 4 or higher = 95% (n = 37)

5. How would you rate the conference as a useful and productive experience?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Not at all						to a great extent
Freq.	(0)	(0)	(1)	(4)	(4)	(20)	(5)

Percentage of ratings 4 or higher = 98% (n = 34)

6. What did you like most about the conference?

Practical examples

- o Concrete examples; specific suggestions; practical suggestion; down-to-earth examples; Prof. Garnett's presentation of topical cases
- o The speakers all emphasized the pragmatic and practical
- o The information given
- o Useful classroom strategies
- o Successful strategies for helping students

Format and Atmosphere

- o The format
- o The question and answer sessions
- o The discussion afterwards
- o The topics
- o The presentations (2 responses)
- o The variety of speakers
- o Informality
- o Pace

Interaction, Meeting Colleagues

- o Interaction among participants at breaks
- o I got to meet many colleagues

The Speakers

- o Speakers were very knowledgeable
- o Speakers were balanced regarding research and practical information (2 responses)
- o Dynamic speakers (2 responses); superb speakers
- o Genuine concern of presenters and ability to relate to audience
- o Choice of speakers was good

Specific Workshops

- o Workshops 2 and 3
- o Workshops 1 and 2
- o Workshop 2
- o Workshop 3

Miscellaneous

- o That it took place!
- o Put this show on the road!

7. What did you like least about the conference?

Not enough time for or arrangements for interaction

- o Too much lecturing, needed more group activities; long lectures; length of presentations should be 45 minutes
- o Too many lectures, not enough time for discussion; need more time to ask questions of speakers after each presentation
- o Expected more workshop, hands-on experience
- o Not enough opportunity to exchange with participants
- o Large groups
- o No interaction of all the presenters

Organizational and Technical Problems

- o Lack of technical aids for presenters--visual aids, overhead projectors, slides etc. (2 responses)
- o Many important issues and concerns discussed too late on Friday afternoon when most people had left

Miscellaneous

- o Need more information on identifying and helping LD students
- o Not enough information about reading
- o First presentation used too much technical language unfamiliar to most of us
- o Why "community college?" I think the differences between community college and senior colleges are minor, at least regarding LD students.

8. What would you like to see included in the second conference?

Regarding the format

- o Panel discussion
- o More opportunity for participants to do "peer" or group work
- o More opportunity for brainstorming together
- o More sharing of what people are actually doing

Specific information or demonstrations requested

- o Examination of "test" instruments or sample of some
- o More on identifying and profiling LD students
- o Criteria for selection, development and evaluation of diagnostic criteria or instruments
- o More on LD vs. basic skills
- o Reading problems of the LD student
- o Demonstration of diagnostic teaching (2 responses)
- o How a rap group works

Specific information or demonstration requested (continued)

- o Have LD students at the conference
- o Videotapes of students

Information on available services

- o Some listing of services I can refer students to (2 responses)
- o Information on funding sources (2 responses)

Practical suggestions for implementation

- o How to implement at CUNY.
- o How to get projects going
- o Information on where to observe successful programs

Impact of LD on social, emotional and work functioning

- o How does LD affect the rest of their lives--work, social functioning
- o Specifics on (emotional) counseling for LD students--more than general "support" is needed; a counseling workhop

Miscellaneous

- o More current ideas and research
- o More theory-based classroom strategies
- o Presentations by people actually teaching LD students
- o More faculty and policy people--to change faculty attitudes (2 responses)
- o More faculty from colleges that have education and LD departments or programs

---

Demographic Information

9. For how many years have your worked in a community college:

(Freq.= 5)	15%	0-2 years	18%	6-10 years (Freq. = 6)
(Freq.= 8)	24%	3-5years	33%	11-15 years (Freq. = 11)
			9%	16+ years (Freq. = 3)

10. What department do you work in?

Department	# of Responses
English	9
Speech	1
Adult Education	1
Continuing Education	2
Special Education	1
Reading	2
Basic Skills	2
Developmental Skills	5
Student Development	1
Student Services	3
Special Services	2
Special Services for Disadvantaged Students	1
Department of Educational Services	1
Disabled Student Services	1
Learning Center	1
Academic Support	1
Academic Affairs	1
Counseling	1
Student Affairs	1

Note: Some participants gave more than one response. Also, many of the above departments may serve similar functions despite their differing nanes.

11. What is your present position?

Position

Directors of:
- Grading process
- Counseling, Dept. of Educational Services
- Skills Center

Coordinators of:
- Developmental Math
- Remedial Writing Program
- E.S.L.
- English Skills Center
- Special Services
- Disabled Student Services
- Coordinator of Tutoring, Speech Department
- Academic Coordinator
- Special Needs Students
- Psychological Services

Position (continued)

Professors, Instructors, Teachers:
- Reading (3 responses)
- Writing
- Speech and Communication
- Special Ed.
- Counseling
- Unspecified department

Counselors:
- Disabled, LD (2 responses)
- E.S.L.
- Test modification
- Unspecified department (3 responses)

Tutors:
- Reading development
- Mildly retarded adults

12. What is your highest education and level completed?

9% Undergraduate Degree (Freq. = 3)

51% Master's Degree (Freq. = 18)

40% Doctoral Degree (Freq. = 14)

(Total n = 35)

13. Are you providing services to learning disabled students on campus?

(Freq. = 25) 78% Yes 22% No (Total n = 32)

If yes, please specify

Note: Some participants gave more than one response.

Type of Service	# of Responses
Counseling	8
Support services and referrals	2
Evaluation and Identification	5
Tutoring (LD, basic reading and writing, study skills)	8
Teaching reading, writing, study skills; remediation; basic ed. classes	4
Special provisions for writing classes	1
Faculty Development	4
Test Accomodation	3
Preparation for CUNY WAT and CRAT tests	1
Individually, by teacher, in class	2
Advocacy	1
Ad hoc: "We cooperate amongst ourselves"	1
Vocational education program	1

Summary of Evaluation Ratings and Comments: March 1987 Inservice Training Conference

Project staff comments on evaluation data

This conference was very well received. As with the first conference, participants welcomed the opportunity to hear about learning disabilities first hand from researchers and practitioners whose work was well regarded in the field. As with comments on the previous conference, participants were enthusiastic about the usefulness of the resource materials that were distributed. A number of participants reported to project staff that they were looking forward to sharing information learned in the conference with their colleagues on campus.

The evaluation questionnaire completed by conference participants at the end of the day is provided below. Following this is a summary of evaluation ratings and comments.

The Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York

Center for Advanced Study in Education
Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education
33 West 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10036
(212) 221-3895, -3896

EVALUATION: March 27, 1987

To assist the Institute in evaluating this conference, we would like you to complete this form anonymously. Please circle your response.

1a. The workshop "Implications of theories and research findings for instruction and accommodation of learning disabled community college students" was:

1	2	3	4	5
inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent

1b. The application of theories of reading to learning disabilities was clearly presented:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

1c. This workshop helped me to understand better the problems of learning disabled community college students:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

1d. List some useful ideas that emanated from this workshop.

1e. What additional information would you have liked?

2a The workshop "Innovative teaching strategies for the learning disabled" was:

1	2	3	4	5
inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent

2b. This workshop will help me to serve learning disabled students more effectively:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

2c. This workshop provided practical suggestions for helping learning disabled students in the classroom:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

2d. List some useful ideas that emanated from the workshop.

2e. What additional information would you have liked?

3a. The workshop "Understanding a learning disabilities evaluation and its implications" was:

1	2	3	4	5
inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent

3b. This workshop helped me better understand how to interpret a learning disabilities evaluation:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

3c. This workshop contained useful suggestions for translating learning disabilities evaluations into concrete methods of working with learning disabled students:

1	2	3	4	5
to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent

3d. List some useful ideas that emanated from this workshop.

3e. What additional information would you have liked?

---

4. To what extent did the conference meet your expectations?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						to a great extent

5. How would you rate the conference as a useful and productive experience?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all to a great extent

6. What did you like most about the conference?

7. What did you like least about the conference?

8. What would you like to see included in future conferences?

Demographic Information

9. For how many years have your worked in a community college:

_____ 0-2 years
_____ 3-5years
_____ 16+ years
_____ 6-10 years
_____ 11-15 years

10. What department do you work in? _____

11. What is your present position? _____

12. What is your highest education and level completed?

_____ Undergraduate Degree

_____ Master's Degree

_____ Doctoral Degree

13. Are you providing services to learning disabled students on campus?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please specify _____

_____

Conference: Successful Approaches to Learning Disabilities in the Community College
March 27, 1987

SUMMARY OF RATINGS AND COMMENTS

Note: Numbers in parentheses are frequencies of ratings.

1a. The workshop "Implications of theories and research findings for instruction and accommodation of learning disabled community college students" was:

	1	2	3	4	5
	inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent
Freq.	(1)	(1)	(4)	(14)	(19)

Percentage of rating 3 or higher = 95% (n = 39)

1b. The application of theories of reading to learning disabilities was clearly presented:

	1	2	3	4	5
	to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent
Freq.	(2)	(2)	(6)	(16)	(15)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 90% (n = 41)

1c. This workshop helped me to understand better the problems of learning disabled community college students:

	1	2	3	4	5
	to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent
Freq.	(1)	(3)	(5)	(17)	(10)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 89% (n = 36)

1d. List some useful ideas that emanated from this workshop.

Stage theory of reading development

- o stage theory of reading; identification of reading stages; stages of reading development (10 responses)

Teaching strategies and relation of reading to knowledge, language knowledge, cognition, thinking skills

- o teaching strategies were wonderfully helpful; approaches in teaching reading; teaching techniques
- o similarity between strategies used in teaching advanced reading and today's "critical thinking"
- o interdependence of cognition and reading skills
- o students need to learn facts as well as skills

Teaching strategies and relation of reading to knowledge, language knowledge, cognition, thinking skills (continued)

- o differentiation among language knowledge, cognition, and reading skills
- o importance of vocabulary development
- o higher level of reasoning needed for today's jobs
- o the way to teach reading is by having students read

Approaches and considerations in planning services to students

- o while students with 8th grade reading level can progress in college with good instruction and intervention, those below this level need serious remediation, not just remedial courses
- o repeating remedials is useless
- o importance of expert help for students with learning disabilities
- o services delivered to students must be diverse depending on the level of reading
- o how to break down resources to aid students
- o interface with other instructors

Miscellaneous

- o remedials are given throughout the country, in all, even the finest academic institutions
- o information concerning adult illiteracy
- o expanded definitions of L.D.
- o Chall is the expert in this area and always adds to my knowledge
- o discussion and presentation excellent
- o implementing study skills and developmental skills in a tutoring program and offering these skills in a workshop
- o how to help set up better functioning committees

le. What additional information would you have liked?

More specific teaching techniques and strategies

- o more advanced information on LD strategies for students at reading grade levels 8-12
- o more specific instruction to use with LD students
- o maybe more specific techniques to develop skills at each stage
- o more information about actual instruction
- o specific references to college LD students

Relationships between reading, cognition, language, knowledge

- o depth discussion on the relationship between cognition, reading skills and language, knowledge (2 responses)
- o more specific theories and latest trends regarding reading needs

ESL vs. native English LD students

- o compare and contrast between ESL and native English speakers (L1 vs. L2)
- o What about the foreign student? ESL

Differences between "remedial" or "deficient" and LD students

- o difference between remedial and learning disabled student
- o more discussion of the deficient student

More peer interaction and question and answer time

- o more question and answer time
- o peer interaction time, to trade off skills and abilities

Miscellaneous

- o strategies for tutors (although I realized Mr. Michaels' tips can apply)
- o would have liked to have the opportunity to discuss the relationship between characteristics of writing at various stages and the quality of that writing. I thought some of the presenter's examples, while illustrating certain characteristics, were poorly written.
- o more information about role of counseling and other support personnel
- o more case studies
- o speaker would not get into "politics." I'd like to get into this practical, real area

---

2a The workshop "Innovative teaching strategies for the learning disabled" was:

	1	2	3	4	5
	inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent
Freq.	(1)	(5)	(5)	(15)	(15)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 85% (n = 41)

2b. This workshop will help me to serve learning disabled students more effectively:

	1	2	3	4	5
	to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent
Freq.	(1)	(4)	(6)	(13)	(16)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 88% (n = 40)

2c. This workshop provided practical suggestions for helping learning disabled students in the classroom:

	1	2	3	4	5
	to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent
Freq.	(1)	(4)	(3)	(13)	(19)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 88% (n = 40)

2d. List some useful ideas that emanated from the workshop.

Importance of structure and organization and objectives

- o structure for good teaching was excellent
- o importance of lecture organization with LD students
- o teaching organization abilities by instructor style--role modeling
- o setting the framework for student to follow on his/her own
- o set up the course objectives
- o lecture guidelines
- o outline helpful

Practical suggestions

- o in general, there were many practical, specific, concrete strategies, suggestions, clearly presented (4 responses)
- o need to teach students how to use various aides, e.g. the tape recorder, more efficiently (2 responses)
- o teach through multiple mediums
- o multi-sensory presentations--including visual, auditory assists, plus kinetic, haptic experience, when student writes on a structured form
- o reinforce through multiple media
- o all students can benefit from more focused and flexible methods in the classroom

Miscellaneous

- o the stages as related to community colleges very helpful
- o LD students truly need not be taught differently from other students. Good teaching leads to well-taught students.
- o the application to "normal" student population
- o the approach and manner of presentation related clearly to the topic
- o it did not provide me with any new ideas, but it reinforced those that I was familiar with and using already; (2 responses)
- o all of them

2e. What additional information would you have liked?

More on specific techniques

- o I would have liked more innovative techniques
- o related specific methods of teaching to specific disabilities
- o need specific teaching strategies for LD
- o perhaps there could have been more specific suggestions as to ways of providing alternative methods of presentation

Less simplified and basic presentation

- o we already do much of the strategies that were discussed. This was at a too elementary and basic level. (4 responses)
- o The presenter misjudged his audience (I think).

Miscellaneous

- o excellent, very competent; excellent presentation
- o fine on "content" teachers, but what about remedial courses?
- o more discussion time
- o tempo could have been faster

Miscellaneous (continued)

- o more awareness of what is going on in other institutions
- o implied that LD students only attend community colleges
- o practical ways to reshape existing developmental skills department
- o More real-life experiences, successes and/or failures

3a. The workshop "Understanding a learning disabilities evaluation and its implications" was:

	1	2	3	4	5
	inadequate	fair	good	very good	excellent
Freq.	(2)	(2)	(3)	(17)	(16)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 90% (n = 40)

3b. This workshop helped me better understand how to interpret a learning disabilities evaluation:

	1	2	3	4	5
	to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent
Freq.	(1)	(3)	(7)	(7)	(18)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher - 89% (n = 36)

3c. This workshop contained useful suggestions for translating learning disabilities evaluations into concrete methods of working with learning disabled students:

	1	2	3	4	5
	to a very small extent	to a small extent	to a moderate extent	to a large extent	to a very large extent
Freq.	(3)	(4)	(10)	(9)	(10)

Percentage of ratings 3 or higher = 81% (n = 36)

3d. List some useful ideas that emanated from this workshop.

General comments

- o possibly of all papers presented in both sessions, this discussion has best addressed its stated topic.
- o clarified points I've been trying to understand for years
- o much clearer understanding of background information on learning disabilities
- o very interesting ideas
- o articulate, thought-provoking speaker

Information on tests

- o good tests are available for evaluation
- o I should get some of my students tested
- o the fact that this resource for evaluation exists
- o ability to make a referral

Information on different types or categories of LD

- o types of dyslexia, LD, and the concrete description of symptoms (7 responses)
- o this presentation has been the most helpful in identifying LD students
- o excellent overview of the LD population

Miscellaneous

- o schematization of individuals who come for evaluation
- o comparative prevalence of auditory processing problem
- o delineation of categories of students in academic difficulty
- o comparison of students failing placement exams and those graduating
- o deficiency vs. disability
- o data from CUNY
- o helped me understand my school better

3e. What additional information would you have liked?

More on implications of LD evaluation; practical suggestions

- o implications of a learning disabilities evaluation
- o speaker really did not help me to understand a learning disabilities evaluation
- o the topic of the workshop and the information presented were quite different
- o enough supplied about evaluation--more information needed about recommendations
- o classroom applications of information supplied
- o further explore the implications for instruction
- o more practical suggestions
- o case studies
- o specific methods to remediate LD students

Miscellaneous

- o just great as is
- o if students show phonological dyslexia does it help to concentrate on sight reading? Are we asking these students to do something they can't by asking them to take college level courses?
- o more concrete methods for working with LD students
- o more information about the referral service (I felt I missed something)

4. To what extent did the conference meet your expectations?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Not at all						to a great extent
Freq	(0)	(1)	(1)	(3)	(7)	(12)	(13)

Percentage of ratings 4 or higher = 95% (n = 37)

5. How would you rate the conference as a useful and productive experience?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Not at all						to a great extent
Freq.	(0)	(0)	(1)	(3)	(4)	(16)	(12)

Percentage of ratings 4 or higher = 97% (n = 36)

6. What did you like most about the conference?

Speakers

- o choice of presenters excellent (2 responses)
- o listening to the speakers' presentations
- o quality of presentations
- o Jeanne Chall's talk (3 responses)
- o Dr. Jeffrey Rosen (4 responses)
- o Craig Michaels' talk

Variety of topics and points of view

- o good variety of topics presented, variation of presentations (3 responses)
- o variation--theoretical, practical, clinical
- o divergence of points of view

Practical, focused

- o practical ideas; practical application is possible from the information learned (3 responses)
- o practical, implementable teaching ideas
- o focused on the problem

Conference organization and structure

- o kept to time limits (2 responses)
- o organized talks
- o not too many presenters
- o well-organized event; organization
- o small groups
- o time for discussion

Miscellaneous

- o meet colleagues dealing with similar problems; interaction among the participants

Miscellaneous (continued)

- o speakers' informal manner of presentation
- o possibility of growth for students
- o subject presented
- o it built well upon the last conference--when is the next one?

7. What did you like least about the conference?

Non-critical "criticisms"

- o nothing I didn't like (2 responses)
- o I would have liked to hear from each of the speakers for a long time!
- o wasn't long enough--only one day.

Needed more time for peer interaction

- o not enough time to meet, share with participants

Comments on specific speakers

- o Prof. Michaels' discussion (2 responses)
- o Prof. Michaels' information necessary, but too much time spent on it--redundant
- o afternoon session

Not enough specifics

- o still need more practical information, more case examples

Comments on the physical environment, facilities

- o very uncomfortable chairs; no desks; poor lighting
- o misuse of overhead projector

Miscellaneous

- o would like to have more discussion about how to employ the proposed strategies on different campuses given the political realities and budget constraints
- o how can teachers locate students?
- o would have been helpful to have been given more reference materials pertaining to Dr. Rosen's talk

8. What would you like to see included in future conferences?

Format of the conference

- o perhaps small discussion groups instead of one large lecture, small group workshops, these weren't "workshops" but presentations (9 responses)
- o small (peer group) methods.
- o teachers coming in and showing what they do which works!

More specific, practical applications

- o individual prescriptions for dealing with specific learning disabilities that were discussed
- o I would like more specific examples of ways to deal with dyslexics in the classroom that are more original than presented here
- o less theory, more practical application ideas I can try in my classroom
- o More on relationship of diagnosis and type of effective remediation

More on identifying, evaluating LD

- o an actual evaluation by a specialist
- o testing information, case evaluations
- o further research and discussion on identifying LDs

More on ESL

- o more on ESL and LD
- o coping mechanisms for ESL students
- o becoming functional in English at the Community College level

"Non-critical" criticisms

- o more of the same
- o please bring Mr. Michaels and Dr. Rosen back
- o same speakers going on from where they left off
- o specifics such as presented by Dr. Rosen

Miscellaneous

- o networking--programs for LD at various colleges (panel)
- o a greater effort made to include the administrators and others who are responsible for the policy decisions to allow these recommendations to be acted upon
- o the letter to the provosts tends to encourage more faculty participation. Perhaps a request can go out before the conference

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Demographic Information

9. For how many years have you worked in a community college:

(Freq. = 10) 25% 0-2 years	20% 6-10 years (Freq. = 8)
(Freq. = 12) 30% 3-5years	22.5% 11-15 years (Freq. = 9)
	2.5% 16+ years (Freq. = 1)

10. What department do you work in?

Department	# of Responses
College Skills	6
Special Education	2
Student Development	2
Reading	1
Continuing Education	1
ESL	1
Special Services	5
Student Services	4
Disabled Student Services	3
Personal Counseling	2
Speech Clinic	1
Special Services for Disadvantaged Students	1
Assessment	1
Tutoring Center	1
Learning Resource Center	1
Student Affairs	1
Student Personnel Services	1
English	5
Speech	3
Humanities	2
Math	1

Note: Some participants gave more than one response. Also, many of the above departments may serve similar functions, despite their differing names.

11. What is your present position?

Position

Directors of:
- Special Services (2)
- Continuing Education
- Assessment

Coordinators of:
- Disabled Student Services
- Developmental English Reading Program
- Speech Clinic
- Tutoring Center
- Reading, Writing
- Handicapped Student Services
- Special Services
- Writing

11. What is your present position?

Position (continued)

Professors, Instructors/Lecturers, Teachers, Tutors in:
- English
- Humanities
- Learning Disabilities
- College Skills
- Unspecified department: Professors (3); Instructors/Lecturers (2); Teachers/Teaching Assistants (5); Tutor (1)

Counselors and Consultants in:
- Master Counselor Assessment Specialist (2)
- Counselor for the Disabled
- Counselor, unspecified (3)
- Consultant
- Learning Specialist

12. What is your highest educational level completed?

10% Undergraduate Degree (Freq. = 4)

56% Master's Degree (Freq. = 22)

33% Doctoral Degree (Freq. = 13)

13. Are you providing services to learning disabled students on campus? If YES, which?
94% Yes (Freq. = 33) 6% No (Freq. = 2)

- o testing/evaluation for disabilities (8)
- o counseling (7)
- o tutoring (6)
- o academic advisement--helping students select courses (6)
- o LD specialist (2)
- o extra time for exams (2)
- o English tutoring in reading and writing
- o acceptance of alternate forms of assignments
- o teaching basic skills (oral/aural components)
- o computerized remedial classes
- o vocational counseling
- o consultation
- o advocacy
- o presentations to, training of faculty
- o counseling on how students can help themselves work more efficiently
- o counseling support for remaining in school
- o limited services; informal, on as-needed basis
- o consultation with faculty
- o work with Special Student Services for testing and referral
- o referral

Summary of Evaluation Ratings and Comments: March 1987 Inservice Training Conference

Project staff comments on evaluation data

This conference was very well received. As with the first conference, participants welcomed the opportunity to hear about learning disabilities first hand from researchers and practitioners whose work was well regarded in the field. As with comments on the previous conference, participants were enthusiastic about the usefulness of the resource materials that were distributed. A number of participants reported to project staff that they were looking forward to sharing information learned in the conference with their colleagues on campus.

The evaluation questionnaire completed by conference participants at the end of the day is provided below. Following this is a summary of evaluation ratings and comments.

APPENDIX 2

Conference Agendas
List of Conference Participants
Effects of Inservice Training Activities on Campus: Spread of Effect

The Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York

Center for Advanced Study in Education
Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education
33 West 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10036
(212) 221-3895, -3896

SUCCESSFUL APPROACHES TO LEARNING DISABILITY IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

First Conference: December 5th, 1986, in Room 207 of the CUNY Graduate Center, 33 West 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036.

Agenda

8:30-9:00	Registration and Coffee
9:00-9:15	Introduction: Defining learning disability
9:15-10:30	Professor Frank Vellutino, Director, Child Research and Study Center, SUNY, Albany: Applying learning disability research in the community college classroom
10:30-11:45	Professor Katherine Garnett, Department of Special Education, Hunter College, CUNY: Identifying learning disabled students in the classroom: Typical profiles
11:45-1:00	Lunch
1:00-2:30	Professor Jacqueline Jones, Department of Specialized Services in Education, Lehman College, CUNY: Distinguishing language problems from learning disability in students with limited proficiency in English
2:30-3:00	LD Feedback and Consultation Service

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of the City University of New York

Center for Advanced Study in Education
Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education
33 West 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10036
(212) 221-3895, -3896

SUCCESSFUL APPROACHES TO LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Second Conference: March 27, 1987 in the Third Floor Studio of the CUNY Graduate Center

Agenda

8:30 - 9:00	Registration and coffee
9:00 - 9:15	Review of basic concepts in learning disability
9:15 - 10:30	Dr. Jeanne S. Chall, Harvard Graduate School of Education: Implications of theories and research findings for instruction and accommodation of learning disabled community college students
10:30 - 11:45	Professor Craig Michaels, Coordinator of Learning Disabilities Projects, Human Resources Center, National Center for Employment of the Disabled: Innovative teaching strategies for the learning disabled
11:45 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 2:00	Dr. Jeffrey Rosen, Assistant Dean of Division of Social Science and Professor of Psychology, The City College of CUNY: Understanding a learning disabilities evaluation and its implications
2:30 - 3:00	General discussion: Participants' experiences in working with their colleagues to serve learning disabled students on campus

The Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York

Center for Advanced Study in Education
Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education
Graduate Center: 33 West 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10036
212 221-3895/96

CONFERENCE

Successful Aproaches to Learning Disabilities in the Community College

December 5, 1986 -- Participants

Name	Community College	Department
Yeghia Aslanian	Borough of Manhattan	Developmental Skills
Isabella Caruso	Kingsborough	ESL
Myrna Charry	Queensborough	Basic Skills
Anthony Colarossi	Kingsborough	Special Services
Douglas Cooper	LaGuardia	Jobward Bound Program
Juliana Corn	Queensborough	Math
Bryna Diamond	LaGuardia	Adult Learning Center
Tom Fitzpatrick	Rockland	Psychology
Alexis Frazier	LaGuardia	Adult Learning Center
Morton Fuhr	Kingsborough	English
Pat Brown-Height	LaGuardia	English
Lany Hirsch	Westchester	Academic Support Center
Bette Kalash	Borough of Manhattan	Developmental Skills
Alexandra Klein	Queensborough	Math
Elaine Krautman	LaGuardia	Adult Learning Center
Abraham Kuppersmith	Borough of Manhattan	English
Matthew Lanna	Borough of Manhattan	Student Life
Marie Lederman	LaGuardia	Freshman Affairs
Irene Liddle	New York City Technical	Developmental Skills
John Little	Borough of Manhattan	Counseling
William Lupardo	Farmingdale	Language Center
Vick Margolis	Nassau	Disabled Student Services
Susan Markman	Westchester	Academic Support Center
Nancy McClure	Borough of Manhattan	English
Maureen McHugh	Staten Island	English Skills Center

Successful Aproaches to Learning Disabilities in the Community College

December 5, 1986 -- Participants (continued)

Name	Community College	Department
Joann Mischianti	New York City Technical	Disabled Student Services
Cynthia Moore	Hostos	English
Rhona S. Noll	New York City Technical	Math
Myrna Pagan	Bronx	Special Education
Joyce Palmer	New York City Technical	Disabled Student Services
Paul Panes	Queensborough	Basic Skills
Carmen Price	Borough of Manhattan	Speech
Suzanne Putnam	Westchester	Counseling & Student Development
Elliot Rosman	Queensborough	Disabled Students Services
Phyllis Ruttenberg	Bronx	Special Education
Estelle Schneider	LaGuardia	Communication Skills
Joan Seals	Bronx	Student Development
Sylvia Seidman	Borough of Manhattan	Developmental Skills
Golda Soloman	Borough of Manhattan	Speech & Communications
Ellen Spergel	Rockland	Student Services
Mike Stimola	Borough of Manhattan	Disabled Students Services
Carol Tillman	Westchester	Counseling & Student Development
Bettye J. VanBuren	Borough of Manhattan	Office of Dean of Faculty
Judith Walter	New York City Technical	Developmental Skills
Leona Waxman	Kingsborough	Student Development
Gail Wood	Staten Island	English Skills Center
Trudy Woods	Nassau	Disabled Students Services

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of the City University of New York

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33 West 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10036
(212) 221-3895, -3896

Conference on
Successful Approaches to
Learning Disabilities in the Community College

March 27, 1987

Participants

Name	Community College	Department
Julie Altshuler	LaGuardia	Communication Skills
Kathi Brown	Rockland	Special Services
Pat Brown-Height	LaGuardia	English
Jean Bushelon	Rockland	Special Services
Isabella Caruso	Kingsborough	English/ESL
Cleta Ciulla	Rockland	College Skills
Anthony Colarossi	Kingsborough	Student Development
Douglas Cooper	LaGuardia	Jobward Bound Program
Catherine Davis	Rockland	College Skills
Jennifer Ferrer	Rockland	College Skills
Selma Gortler	Kingsborough	Special Services
Margaret Groglio	Queensborough	Disabled Student Services
Bridget Halpin	Rockland	College Skills
Fern Khan	LaGuardia	Community Services
Alexandra Klein	Queensborough	Math
Matthew Lanna	Borough of Manhattan	Student Life
Marie Lederman	LaGuardia	Freshman Skills
Victor Margolis	Nassau	Disabled Students Services

Participants

Name	Community College	Department
Nancy McClure	Borough of Manhattan	English
Maureen McHugh	Staten Island	English
Peter Miller	Staten Island	English
Joann Mischianti	New York City Technical	Special Services
Joyce Palmer	New York City Technical	Special Services
Carmen Price	Borough of Manhattan	Speech
Carol Putnam	Westchester	Academic Support
Carol Rivera-Kron	LaGuardia	Humanities
Elliot Rosman	Queensborough	Disabled Students Services
Phyllis Ruttenberg	Bronx	Special Education
Joanetta Seals	Bronx	Student Development
Frances Singh	Hostos	English
Golda Solomon	Borough of Manhatan	Speech
Richard Thaler	Nassau	Disabled Students Services
Carol Tillman	Westchester	Counseling
Leona Waxman	Kingsborough	Special Services
Iris Weinhouse	Rockland	College Skills
Gail Wood	Staten Island	English
Trudy Woods	Nassau	Disabled Students Services

Effects of Inservice Training Activities on Campus:
Spread of Effect

There is anecdotal evidence that the inservice training activities had a positive spread of effect to the community college campuses. For example, participants informally reported to project staff that they discussed information from presentations with colleagues. Also, resource materials that were handed out at the workshops were shared with colleagues on campus. Further, there were several specific examples of the positive effect that the conferences had in campus activities to serve learning disabled community college students.

1. Four faculty members of Borough of Manhattan Community College met for the first time at the December conference. They discussed the strong interest each had in providing effective services for students in their classrooms who were atypical learners. On the basis of information about learning disabilities they obtained at the conference, they formed a Faculty and Administrators Committee on the Atypical Learner on campus, with the consent of the College President. Meetings that have been held have attracted up to sixty participants. As of the writing of this report, activities are continuing and membership of the committee is growing. In addition to the faculty and administrators committee, the four conference participants have formed a resource club to provide support for learning disabled students on campus. One of the participants reported to project staff that the conferences had been seminal in these activities.
2. An Associate professor in the Speech, Theatre and Communications Arts Department of Borough of Manhattan Community College who is involved in the above-mentioned committee, asked Dolores Perin, Project Co-Director, to be her mentor in the former's activities with the CUNY Women's Leadership Institute, a CUNY staff development organization. Her activities involve developing the faculty and administrators committee and student resource club described above. She had also applied for an internship, under the aegis of the Leadership Institute, with the University Dean at the newly-established CUNY Office of the Disabled, that will involve gathering information concerning learning disabilities on the CUNY college campuses. Dr. Perin would also mentor these activities. Professor Solomon stated to Dr. Perin that the December conference has stimulated her to action regarding the problem of learning disabilities in community college students.

3. A conference participant who is campus Coordinator of the Disabled at Hostos Community College invited Dr. Jacqueline Jones, speaker at the December conference, to make a presentation concerning providing appropriate services for learning disabled students with minimal English language proficiency to faculty on his campus.

4. A conference participant who is campus Coordinator for the Disabled at Kingsborough Community College, after attending the March conference, set up a day-long meeting with Dr. Jeffrey Rosen, whom he had heard for the first time. At this meeting, the two individuals discussed their work with learning disabled students on campus.

5. A Masters student of Professor Jones, a workshop presenter, contacted Dr. Perin and obtained information concerning services for learning disabled students in CUNY community colleges for a paper she was writing. This student has a long-term goal of serving learning disabled college students.

APPENDIX 3:

Dissemination Document:
"Guidelines for Instructors Working with Learning Disabled Community College Students"

Guidelines for Instructors
Working with Learning Disabled Community College Students

The information provided in this document is derived from conferences that were given in the 1986-87 academic year for CUNY and Metropolitan area SUNY community college faculty on the topic of learning disabilities. These activities were funded by the New York State Education Department under VEA Grant Award #152-87-3758 to the CASE Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education (IRDOE) of the City University of New York Graduate School.

Recognizing the significant increase in the incidence of learning disabilities on the community college campus, this project was designed not only to heighten awareness regarding this issue but to also to provide information about instructional interventions and other appropriate service provision. CASE/IRDOE ran two conferences each of which comprised three workshop presentations by researchers and practitioners who were expert in the field of learning disabilities in college populations.

Below are brief summaries of the presentations that were made at the six conference workshops on December 5, 1986 and March 27, 1987. The summaries were prepared by project staff, who are responsible for the content as expressed below. Any misrepresentations are the responsibility of project staff. Following the summaries is a set of suggestions for working with learning disabled community college students. These suggestions emanate from the workshop presentations and were prepared by project staff. Finally, there is short bibliography of selected references related to learning disabilities in the college population. This document is, in essence a "proceedings" of the conference we held. We hope that it will be useful in the growing effort on the community college compuses to serve learning disabled students.

FIRST CONFERENCE

Friday, December 5, 1987

Workshop 1

Applying Learning Disabilities Research in the Community College Classroom

Presenter: Professor Frank Vellutino
Director, Child Research and Study Center, SUNY Albany.

Professor Vellutino is involved in research on the cognitive and linguistic processes underlying reading ability. He spoke in some detail about the major theories and research in that area and contrasted a number of popular but conflicting theories. He stated that one of the major misconceptions about learning disabilities is the belief that it is a well-defined, readily diagnosed entity. He said that it is not. His review was a critical one, evaluating some theories as more or less viable than others. He described several of his own research studies and explained his own theories about the cognitive and linguistic processes underlying reading ability and reading disabilities. He spoke of two conceptual distinctions which are useful in understanding and ordering the various theories and definitions of learning disabilities.

The first conceptual distinction was between general aptitude and specific aptitude. Many definitions of learning disability say that a person may only be called learning disabled if he or she is of high IQ (considered a measure of "general aptitude") and that his or her disability is a separate "specific" aptitude problem. Dr. Vellutino discussed some of the problems inherent in that approach.

The second conceptual distinction was that between ultimate and immediate causes of learning disability. Ultimate causes refer to genetic, maturational, neurological, or developmental factors--things "built into the system." Some of the basic process deficits postulated have been: perceptual deficits, cross-modal transfer, intersensory deficits, central auditory processing, attentional, and sequencing deficits. These are all basic difficulties in learning related to basic processes that may not be particular to reading but may be involved in all learning. In his review of the research literature, Professor Vellutino discussed various theories which attempt to explain learning disabilities in terms of certain ultimate

causes. He was particularly critical of some of the old, traditional hypotheses about learning disabilities, such as that the problem is one of perceptual reversal--seeing letters in reverse.

Immediate causes refer to problems in the development of basic skills (as opposed to basic processes) in a particular domain. He defined a basic skill as a skill that is a prerequisite for acquiring knowledge in a given domain. For example, in the case of reading disability, these are language related skills such as sight vocabulary, ability to recognize words quickly and automatically, ability to decode phonetically to make use of context, to make inferences, etc. Dr. Vellutino claimed that language is a critical basic skill for learning in general, and not just for learning reading. "Reading disabilities are language disabilities," he stated.

Professor Vellutino stated that while studying basic processes or ultimate causes of learning disabilities is legitimate for the research laboratory, it is not practical for the educational setting. In the educational setting it is better to invoke the immediate causality definition of learning disabilities and to focus on the basic skills deficiencies in areas that are required for learning. In addition, researchers can learn a great deal from the practical attempts which work on the immediate causality level.

He proposed that the best way to help a student is to define the skill the student is deficient in, that is, the basic skill that is prerequisite in a particular area or domain that he or she is pursuing. The skill should then be analyzed in terms of immediate, rather than ultimate causes--in terms of underlying skills, rather than basic processes, for example: vocabulary, phonetic decoding skills, sensitivity to grammar and syntax, text processing skills such as inference, advance organizing, understanding story grammars, etc.

He also suggested using mastery and criterion-referenced tests, rather than or as a supplement to norm referenced tests. The tests should be designed so that if a student has a particular subskill he or she should be able to do the test (or those items) and if he or she does not have that subskill he cannot.

Workshop 2

Identifying Learning Disabled Students in the Classroom: Typical Profiles

Presenter: Professor Kate Garnett
Department of Special Education, Hunter College, CUNY.

Professor Garnett started her talk with some statistics on students diagnosed as learning disabled, figures which are increasing across the country at all kinds of colleges including public city colleges and Ivy League colleges like Harvard. She considered the argument sometimes heard that the category of learning disabled is so broad that it does not describe any real disability. She disagreed with this claim and she stated that, although the numbers are large enough to be important, they are not so large as to suggest that significant numbers of college students are being improperly labelled learning disabled. Learning disability is rare, but it is a legitimate disability, she stressed.

Professor Garnett discussed the problem of how to help students whose native language is not English and who appear not to be learning. If the student has received language training and seems to be able to communicate in English, one must ask what else may be interfering with his or her learning.

In such cases, one of the first things to be done (after ascertaining that no physical sight or hearing problem is involved) is to assess the student's level of competence in his or her native language. This is difficult and sometimes impossible. Appropriate tests are not available in all languages. It is also difficult or impossible to test intellectual ability and academic skill level in the native language. Intelligence tests are based upon day-to-day knowledge of things expected to be known to people living in our society. If they can be criticized for being culturally biased against certain groups, then they certainly can not adequately assess the intelligence of a recently arrived immigrant. Therefore, said Professor Garnett, we must think not of intelligence but of performance, and of trying to increase performance ability.

Many students who are conversational in their native language have almost no experience with reading and writing in the academic sense. This is true even for some students who have high school diplomas in their native language-- just as it is

true for many English speaking high school graduates. When they are called upon to read or write academic subject matter in English, they therefore face a double difficulty. They are being asked to do in English what they cannot do in their own language. This is difficult, frustrating and anxiety-provoking for them.

Professor Garnett proposed that colleges counsel these students and help them to make a decision about whether to keep trying. She stated that many students are unaware of the extent of their skills deficits. Often they "get through" many credits without realizing it, until someone finally--and suddenly--confronts them with the seriousness of their problem. This can be devastating for students, and it was suggested that we may be doing students a disservice by letting them "get by" in many subject area courses without having to demonstrate reading and writing skills.

Professor Garnett then went on to discuss certain kinds of problems that interfere with the learning of both non-native and native English speaking students. These are problems which can be quite successfully compensated for, if not always eliminated, and include difficulties in problem solving and organization of work and study.

Many students, even if they understand the English language, have trouble generating solutions to problems--generating multiple hypotheses and finding efficient ways to test them. This is often particularly true of students with real language impairments and may be evidenced in either writing or reading or both. In writing, for example, grammar and punctuation may be reasonably good, but the ideas, even good ideas, are not organized. Some students seem to have difficulty in taking into account the perspective of the reader when they write.

In the subject areas, many students do not know how to organize facts in some meaningful way in order to be able to memorize them. Instead they try to memorize a set of unorganized, separate facts, a task even the best learner would have trouble doing.

Some suggestions to help students with organizational problems were:

- o subject area instructors should give students an outline at the beginning of the semester and of each class session. Professor Garnett pointed out that up until college, teachers do a lot of structuring for the students, and students are then expected to do this on their own in college, with no transition. College instructors should continue to outline and organize, if

possible in ways that will show and encourage students gradually to do this more by themselves.

- o Tutoring services should teach students how to organize academic material.
- o Students should be taught what kinds of questions to ask to make things clearer to themselves. Often they are confused and don't know what information to ask for or why they should ask.
- o Students should be taught to ask the instructor what topics will be covering that day; in other words they must learn to ask for the organization they need.

Professor Garnett discussed how the college or university can organize its services for learning disabled students. Most important is inter-departmental coordination in determining student needs and coordinating available services. Also important is keeping track of how students are progressing from semester to semester. There must be an ongoing process of testing/evaluating, teaching testing/evaluating, teaching. Finally, she discussed the value of peer discussion, support or "rap" groups as an esential part of any services for special needs students.

Workshop 3

Distinguishing Language Problems from Learning Disabilities in Students with Limited Proficiency in English

Presenter: Professor Jacqueline Jones
Department of Specialized Services in Education, Lehman College, CUNY.

Professor Jones began her presentation with a discussion of one of the key problems in evaluating and teaching limited English proficiency learning disabled students. This concerned the extremely wide variation among these students in their degree of learning disability and in the level and nature of their competency both in English and in their own language. There are some students who have only conversational skills in both languages. Students also vary in levels of literacy in their native language. Some have done sophisticated reading and writing in that language, and some have not.

Limited English language skills in and of themselves are not evidence of learning disabilities. An English language "disability" must be distinguished from a language disability. Unfortunately, it is very difficulty to evaluate limited English proficiency students for learning disabilities since it is often difficult to distinguish the limited English skills from certain learning disabilities. There is a risk of either falsely diagnosing a learning disability when the problem is really one of English language skills or of missing a real learning disability, including a language disability, because it is assumed that the problem is just the limited English proficiency.

In many cases there are no staff available who speak the student's native language. In addition, appropriate assessment instruments are often not available. For example appropriate assessment instruments do not exist that assess the listening comprehension skill of a student who speaks Korean. Further, while tests of auditory discrimination are usually part of a learning disabilities evaluation, it is usually inappropriate to give one in English to limited English proficiency students, since they are being asked to distinguish English language sounds with which they are not familiar. More appropriate, Professor Jones suggested, would be the use of non-language auditory acuity tests.

Once a student's basic auditory and visual acuity has been tested, the next step in assessing a student is to listen to him or her tell how he or she experiences the problem. This may provide a better diagnostic description than would a standardized test score, even if one does not find out if the student has a specific learning disability. Professor Jones suggested a series of questions to ask a student who is having difficulty in a class. Talking with the student about the problem allows the interviewer to get some sense of the student's language proficiency, at least in English. The student should be asked the same basic learning disabilities screening questions as one would ask a native English speaker, concerning family history, history of school achievement, whether current problems are generalized or erratic, etc. Also, the student should be given a chance to explain what he or she thinks his or her difficulties are and what is causing them.

With probing, some students can tell an instructor in which ways materials must be presented for them to understand information. For example, some students prefer to read and write in English, despite their limited proficiency, because they have little or no experience in academic reading and writing in their native language. Other students may need the instructor to write on the board or need a clear outline.

There is evidence that language-impaired students have difficulty solving problems that require generating and considering multiple hypotheses. Many of these students have organizational problems, both on a verbal and a non-verbal level. This kind of information can serve as a useful guide for the instructor. The instructor can teach strategies for learning, such as how to create an organized conceptual framework to cut down on the need for rote memorization and replace it with organized, meaningful memory. Also, limited language skill students often require that information be presented in a more linguistically simple way.

For their part, students need to learn how they learn and what kinds of questions to ask the instructor. Tutors must be trained to teach students these skills, and not only course subject matter.

Professor Jones spoke of considerations in evaluating student progress in class. The instructor, she suggested, must ask herself what the goal of the class is, what information she wants the students to master, and how students with limited Englsih language skills can demonstrate their knowledge. Often tests can be presented in a

linguistically simpler way but cover the same content. Further, some students can be given an oral exam, rather than an essay. In addition to suggestions for the individual instructor and for tutors, Professor Jones spoke of the need for coordination of all services on campus.

SECOND CONFERENCE

Friday, March 27, 1987

Workshop 1

Implications of Theories and Research Findings for Instruction and Accommodation of Learning Disabled College Students

Presenter: Professor Jeanne S. Chall
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Professor Chall discussed the relationship between reading, language skills, writing and spelling. She pointed out that the problem of learning disabilities is not limited to public universities or colleges with large "inner city" populations. In fact, learning disabilities are found among students from a wide spectrum of backgrounds, and at all kinds of colleges, including, she mentioned, her own, Harvard.

Although definitions of learning disabilities vary, Dr. Chall offered the following definition: functioning in reading and writing below what one's level should be, based on cognitive ability. In other words, a learning disabled student is "smarter" than his or her school performance.

Professor Chall referred to her stage theory of reading development and explained how it can be useful in understanding both the reading and writing difficulties of youth and adults, although the theory was based on an analysis of children's reading development alone.

Before distinguishing the stages of reading development, she listed three requirements for reading at all stages.

1. Language and knowledge
2. Cognition: reasoning and thinking skills
3. Reading skills such as recognizing and sounding out words, finding main points, and grammar.

Although these must be present at all reading stages, they change, and the relationship between them changes as one goes from lower to higher reading stages, so that, in fact reading is a very different process at different stages.

She then defined and described each of the four stages in her well-known theory of reading. Professor Chall claimed that the major problem in reading for community college students is that the average student is at and sometimes below the eighth grade reading level. She cited studies which showed, for example, that 20% of California community college students were reading at or below the fifth grade level and that only 40% of first year students at a midwestern state community college read "adeptly," well enough to read a college textbook. Less than 20% of Black students and even fewer Hispanic students were at the "adept" level. The "adept" level corresponds to Stage 4.

Professor Chall stated that students reading at or below a sixth or seventh grade level need expert help from trained professionals. They need more help than the subject area instructor or a peer tutor, for example, can give. However students reading at around the eighth grade level can be greatly aided by subject area instructors, who can, with the correct methods, help them make the transition from eighth to twelfth grade reading in a relatively short period of time.

To explain how this can be done, she first discussed the characteristics distinguishing eighth from twelfth grade development of the three basic requirements in reading described above.

1. Language and knowledge: twelfth grade texts require language that is complex, abstract and technical. Doing assignments from these texts requires bringing to the text much background knowledge and vocabulary, which are not as necessary for most ninth grade reading level texts.
2. Cognition: twelfth grade texts require a greater ability to read critically, and more highly developed cognitive and problem solving skills.
3. Reading skills: More advanced reading skills are needed, including greater speed, efficiency, knowing what the important ideas are, and metacognitive skills such as knowing whether one is comprehending or not.

Professor Chall stressed that these three areas are interrelated. For example, in a literate society, the more intelligent one is, generally the better a reader one is. However, the converse is also true--the better the reader the more intelligent the person. She argued that the ability to read contributes to intelligence. In other words, good reading skills improve the ability to think. There is evidence that when a person goes from the eighth to the twelfth grade reading level his or her thinking

changes in ways corresponding to the differences in the kinds of reading done at those levels. Therefore, content area teachers at the college can help their student to read and improve their reading by helping them to think better about the subject matter. In fact, many of the current procedures for teaching thinking and teaching higher level reading are quite similar.

Of the three basic requirements of reading, she placed greatest emphasis on the first one. There is strong evidence that in general, and not just in reading, knowledge of a subject area is the greatest factor in expertise. She also cited specific evidence that what most distinguishes a novice from an expert reader is background knowledge and vocabulary. Even for a generally good reader, the areas in which one reads most quickly and effectively are the areas one knows well.

Based upon this evidence and her analysis of it, Professor Chall argued that general reading skills courses that are not related to any particular subject matter are not sufficient. Reading is not just a technique or process; it must have content. Therefore, the subject area instructor is in a unique position to improve students' reading by helping them to deal better with texts of specific content. They can prepare students for reading the text by presenting necessary background knowlege and vocabulary in advance. Some specific suggestions included:

- o List vocabulary words on the board and discuss them in advance.
- o Tell the students what the important ideas in an upcoming reading assignment are.
- o The instructor should ask questions in advance of the reading which will help students see where the main ideas in the chapter are.
- o Students can be taught some "tricks" for reading and writing in each subject area. Instructors can best do this by modeling for students how they can approach reading and writing in each subject area. This should include the following procedure in all classes: The first day, the students should bring the text to class and should be "initiated" into the book. What is the author's style? Where are the main ideas? How should it be read? Should they read the summary first? Subject headings first?

In addition to her theoretical analysis and these practical suggestions, Professor Chall discussed some of the social policy issues implicitly raised by her analysis. In addition, she expressed a conviction that all our youth must learn to

read at the twelfth grade level. In 1940 few jobs required more than an eighth grade reading level. Today many more jobs require a twelfth grade reading level. Even many jobs that do not call for reading on a twelfth grade level require higher reasoning, which comes in part from higher reading. Also, in order to be truly equal participants in the affairs and decisions of our society people must be able to read such things as articles on world affairs in Time, Newsweek or the New York Times, which are difficult for a person with only an eighth grade reading level. She insisted that this is not an elitist, but a democractic postion: What's good for the college professor's daughter or son is not too good for anyone's child.

She went on to say that the reasons for the low literacy levels in our society are complex, and many are beyond the responsibility of the college faculty. However, there is much that they can do. When students learn to read better in any area, they begin to find reading less torturous; this makes them more independent in their learning and gives them greater power over the written word, and it gives them a way to continue to learn when they leave college.

In concluding, Professor Chall offered a summary of her major points, which were the following:

1. Remedial reading is important, and should be done by trained experts.
2. Students reading below sixth or eighth grade level need much more systematic work on their thinking skills.
3. Using easier textbooks is one possible approach, but it is a temporary and limited approach because: (a) there are simply not enough of them, and (b) they do not help bring students up to the higher reading level that they need in our society.
4. Students should be taught some "tricks" in each subject area course; these are best taught by subject area instructors who can model these "tricks" for the students. Subject area faculty must be oriented towards doing this and helped to learn methods.
5. The most important way to help students is to help them to expand their vocabulary and knowledge in the subject they are reading.

Workshop 2

Innovative Teaching Strategies for the Learning Disabled

Presenter: Craig Michaels
Coordinator of Learning Disabilities Projects, Human Resources Center
National Center for Employment of the Disabled.

Craig Michaels began his talk by raising the issue of whether there can be good teaching without learning. Mr. Michaels expressed the view that if students are not learning, it is the responsibility of the teacher to change his or her teaching so that students do learn. Although this principle is accepted at the elementary and secondary school levels, it is not widely accepted at the college level.

Mr. Michaels proceeded to offer a set of specific suggestions for college instructors of learning disabled students. However, he stressed that the suggestions would be useful for all students; a good teacher for the learning disabled is a good teacher for any student. Proposed techniques must also be easy for the instructor to implement; if they take too much time the instructor is less likely actually to use them.

Many of the suggested teaching techniques concerned providing organization and structure for students.

- All teachers should have the course syllabus available to students prior to the start of class. This would help organize the course for students, and is essential for those learning disabled students who qualify for recordings for the blind. They need to know what text will be used in advance in order to get it on tape.
- Expanding the syllabus to include learning objectives and specification of how students will be evaluated or tested.
- Before each topic and each lesson, students should be told what they will be learning and what the important points are.
- Many learning disabled students have great trouble articulating the "main idea" or summarizing. At the end of each topic and lesson, the instructor should summarize the key points. He or she should try to elicit the main ideas from the students, but should do this for them if necessary. This will serve as a model for some, who may learn how to do it themselves.
- Review the main points of the previous class at the beginning of each class.

Many students have trouble knowing what to write down during the class and from the text. They may try to write down everything or may write down the wrong things. The above techniques may help them learn to find the main points, but in addition Mr. Michaels suggested that the instructor should help them learn how to study from a textbook, and offered the following specific technique:

- o Teach the students to read the chapter prior to the lecture and take notes along one side of the paper. Then in class as they listen to the instructor they should find the place in the notes where the teacher is and on the other side of the paper, next to that part in the notes from the text, write down anything the instructor adds, or makes notes of what the instructor stressed, disagreed with, etc.

Regarding modification of exams for learning disabled and other disabled (such as blind) students, the general guiding principle should be to distinguish between whether the student has learned the subject matter of the course and whether he/she has some disability. He presented examples of some reasonable accommodations that can be made in testing:

- o Give untimed tests. Mark down where the student was at the normal time limit, and then let him or her finish the test.
- o Provide alternate test forms. If the student cannot write an essay, let him/her tell you.
- o Learning disabled students who cannot fill out computer answer forms should be allowed to circle the answers on the test itself.
- o Especially for math, analyze how the student did the problem and give partial credit for correct solution mode even if the answer was wrong.
- o Simplify directions.
- o On a case-by-case basis, aids and assistance devices may sometimes be provided, such as a multiplication table.

In concluding, Mr. Michaels stressed again that learning disabled students are not very different from other community college students. The good teaching techniques that help the former will help the latter. The difference is that while the non-learning disabled student may "make it" anyway, the learning disabled student cannot succeed without the instructor's help.

Workshop 3

Understanding a Learning Disabilities Evaluation and its Implications

Presenter: Professor Jeffrey Rosen
City College of the City University of New York
Assistant Dean of the Division of Social Science, Professor of Psychology, and Director of the City College Learning Disabilities Service and Graduate Training in Neuropsychology.

Professor Rosen described the learning disabilities service he directs at City College of CUNY, where evaluations are performed. This is a training service for doctoral students in the Clinical Psychology and Cognition Ph.D. programs at City College. From four to six students per year participate in the service, supervised by three faculty. Referrals are received from anywhere in the CUNY system, for example from community college faculty. The person making the referral receives an evaluation of what is wrong with the student and also recommendations to promote academic improvement.

A minority are self-referred. Most referrals are made by counselors and teachers. A common reason for referring a student is that a strength is discerned despite the fact that the student is on the verge of failing. Approximately 500 college students from all over CUNY have been seen since 1978 when the service began. All students seen are experiencing profound academic difficulties.

The following statistics are representative of the people who have been seen by the service and are not representative of the CUNY student population. The percentages reported by Professor Rosen (see below) added up to more than 100% because students evaluated often belong to more than one of the categories described.

Approximately 10% of students evaluated have academic difficulties associated with hard neuropathology, including epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, tumor and, most commonly, closed head injuries, e.g., concussion and coma. Available school records are examined to see whether there is any precipitous drop-off that could not have been predicted other than as a consequence of that particular neurological insult. In carrying out a clinical evaluation it is necessary to rule out an acute process, i.e., "something that is bad and getting worse" for which there has to be some medical intervention.

Approximately 10% do not have hard neuropathology but need medical attention because they have a systemic illness, e.g., asthma, anemia, mononucleosis, etc. which has been undiagnosed and is interfering with their cognitive processing. Many of these individuals do not have access to health care delivery systems in the same ways that other people do. After the condition has been treated and goes away, the student thinks better and academic performance improves.

Approximately 15% have sensory impairments in hearing or in vision. A very detailed evaluation of these functions is conducted to rule out sensory impairment as a reason for academic failure.

Approximately 20% have moderate to severe psychopathology such as a profound anxiety disorder, which affects ability to sustain attention and concentration. Affective disorders are also seen, frequently depression, which impacts upon memory and concentration. Once the psychological problem is rectified, it is possible for the academic problem to disappear.

Approximately 25% have academic difficulties associated with substance abuse the most common of which is alcohol, although abuse of angel dust, heroin and cocaine is seen. A very mild learning disability such as dyslexia can be severely exacerbated by marajuana so that performance on a reading task will decline significantly.

Approximately 40% have probably been developmentally disabled from the first year of life. They have developmental learning disabilities of the following four types:

1. Dyslexia: a specific learning disability associated with reading problems. There are three to six different types of dyslexia. They are all related to reading problems but come about for different reasons, in the same way as a fever can be generated by different causes. The characteristic most frequently associated with dyslexia in people's minds is letter/spatial reversal, for example mirror image letters and words. In fact, this is one of the least prevalent forms of dyslexia.

   The most frequent form of dyslexia involves an impairment in phonological processing. This can be describe as a "tin ear for language." Even at the age of two years old there is difficulty discriminating between speech sounds, but nothing that an audiologist could detect. Such individuals have

difficulty processing acoustic information rapidly enough to understand everything someone says to them. It may seem that the individual is not paying attention but the problem is one of language processing. Besides having reading problems, students report having difficulty understanding what is being talked about in class. They can understand if the rate of speech is slowed down or if speech is organized into preset patterns. Dyslexics with a phonological impairment may have difficulty using the right words for the ideas they want to express and may show circumlocutions. These problems also show up in writing, which can be poor as a result of trying hard to express meaning while lacking the right words. Such students may have the meaning they want to communicate but may lack its phonological representation. In reading, a person with phonological dyslexia may mispronounce words.

Another form of dyslexia, which is rare, involves semantic substitutions in reading. Such individuals can read words correctly out loud but their comprehension is poor.

2. Dyscalculia: primary difficulties in math especially in computation involving an underlying logic of spatial extension.
3. Agraphia: problem with writing that does not co-occur with a reading problem. This is very rare outside of a neurology service.
4. A history of hyperactivity/attention deficit--such students may not be hyperactive anymore (although they may be fidgety), but have difficulty with concentration and organization. They have difficulty thinking through a sequence. In writing, spelling, grammar and vocabulary may be excellent but there will be an absence of organization of sentences and paragraphs.

Fifty percent of the people seen are academically deficient. Everybody who is learning disabled is academically deficient but not everybody who is academically deficient is learning disabled. There are many people who for a variety of reasons did not learn. Some reasons may be truancy, institutional indifference and poor teaching. For various reasons, these people simply have never acquired the lexical information that they need, including vocabulary, orthographic and phonological correspondences, syntax, and organization necessary for academic functioning. It is not that they cannot acquire these skills - it is just that they have not acquired them

or they have been miseducated. For example, an individual who is taught to read without any knowledge of phonics may not be able to sound out unfamiliar words. The errors such an individual might make might resemble dyslexic errors but the individual may only be miseducated rather than dyslexic. It is very important to distinguish between deficiency and disability. Someone who is deficient may be instructed using standard procedures but will need a good deal of nurturance.

After the evaluation is complete, a treatment plan is developed based on what are considered to be the most important reasons for the student's academic failure. A treatment plan could involve medical referrals, opthalmology, or psychological consultation. Usually a series of interrelated treatments is planned to deal with the interrelated bases of the academic problem.

There seems to be an interdependent relationship between reading and writing abilities where reading ability can be a great limiting factor on the level of writing ability that can be achieved. Most people who have difficulty with reading have difficulty with writing. It is very rare to have difficulty with writing but no difficulty with reading.

"Situational impairments" may account for academic failure. For example, poor test performance may be caused by test anxiety. Some people suffer from extreme anxiety when they have to present orally. Such situational impairments can be dealt with by stress management and desensitizing.

Suggestions for Working with Learning Disabled Community College Students

The following suggestions are culled from the workshop presentations that are summarized above. As several presenters pointed out, many of these suggestions would also be appropriate for the instruction of non-learning disabled students.

1. General suggestions, irrespective of the student's native language:
   - o When a learning problem is presented, rule out physiologically-based sight and hearing problems.
   - o To screen students for a possible learning disability, ask the student about occurrences of poor academic achievement in the family, the student's own educational history and whether learning problems are consistent or erratic.
   - o Define the specific area of deficiency, such as vocabulary, phonetic decoding, making inferences in reading, etc., and teach to the deficiency.
   - o When possible use mastery and criterion-referenced tests rather than or along with norm referenced tests.
   - o Help students generate solutions to problems by helping them make multiple hypotheses and then helping them find efficient ways to test them.
   - o In writing activities, help students take into ccount the perspective of the reader.
   - o Provide students with a course outline at the beginning of the semester.
   - o Include in the outline learning objectives and specify the means of evaluation or testing.
   - o Provide an outline of each class session before it begins, and tell students what the important points will be.
   - o At the end of each class, summarize key points. Elicit the main idea from the students and tell them what it is if necessary.
   - o Review the main points of the previous class at the beginning of each class.
   - o Help students formulate questions that will clarify information.
   - o Set up peer discussion groups for learning desabled students.
   - o Help students improve their reading skills by helping them to think better about the subject matter.

- o List vocabulary words on the board and discuss them in advance of instruction.
- o Inform students of the main ideas in an upcoming reading assignment.
- o Ask questions in advance of the reading assignment which will draw attention to the main ideas.
- o Initiate students into texts to be read by focusing on the writer's style and main ideas. Discuss how the text should be read, for example, summary of subject headings first, etc. Model these procedures for the students.
- o Teach students to read the relevant chapter prior to a lecture and to take notes along one side of the page. Then tach them to use the notes and add to them as they listen to the lecture.
- o Give untimed tests. Note where the student is at the normal time and then let him or her finish the test.
- o Give tests in oral rather than written form.
- o Let students circle answers on the test itself rather than filling in computerized answer forms.
- o In marking math tests, give credit for correct solution mode even if the answer is incorrect.
- o Simplify test directions.
- o On a case by case basis, allow students to use materials such as multiplication tables and dictionaries when taking tests.

2. Suggestions for working with students whose native language is not English:

- o Ascertain whether the student has received adequate English language training.
- o If possible, assess the level of competence in reading, writing and speaking in the native language.
- o Engage the student in conversation, using structured questions, in order to get a sense of the student's English language proficiency.
- o Present information in linguistically simple ways (for example, in short sentences).

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